

# SANITIZED COP

Room 2E980, The Pentagon  
Washington 25, D. C.  
13 June 1961

Dear Mr. President:

By your letter of April 22, 1961, you charged me in association with Attorney General Robert Kennedy, Admiral Arleigh Burke and Director of Central Intelligence Allen Dulles to study our governmental practices and programs in the areas of military and paramilitary, guerrilla and anti-guerrilla activity which fell short of outright war with a view to strengthening our work in this area. You directed special attention to the lessons which can be learned from the recent events in Cuba.

On May 16, our Cuban Study Group submitted to you an interim oral report of our conclusions as of that date. We are now prepared to make our final report to you orally, supported by the following memoranda:

Memorandum No. 1 "Narrative of the Anti-Castro Operation ZAPATA"

Memorandum No. 2 "Immediate Causes of Failure of the Operation ZAPATA"

Memorandum No. 3 "Conclusions of the Cuban Study Group"

Memorandum No. 4 "Recommendations of the Cuban Study Group"

In your letter of April 22, you invited me to submit an individual report subject to the review and comment of my associates. As we have found no difficulty in reaching a unanimous view on all essential points under consideration, we are submitting this view as a jointly agreed study.

In closing, may I express our view of the great importance of a prompt implementation of our first recommendation to establish a Strategic Resources Group supported by a Cold War Indications Center which will allow our government readily to focus its resources on the objectives which you set in the so-called Cold War? We feel that we are losing today on many fronts and that the trend can be reversed only by a whole-hearted union of effort by all Executive departments and agencies of the Government under your guidance.

Sincerely yours,

*Maxwell D. Taylor*  
MAXWELL D. TAYLOR

The President

The White House

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13 June 1961

Memorandum No. 1

NARRATIVE OF THE ANTI-CASTRO CUBAN OPERATION ZAPATA

I. Development of the Concept and Plan

1. Although the Cuban situation had been the subject of serious study in the Special Group\*, Central Intelligence Agency and other Government agencies since 1958, this study takes as its point of departure the basic policy paper, "A Program of Covert Action Against the Castro Regime," approved by the President on 17 March 1960. (See ANNEX 1) This document, developed by the Central Intelligence Agency and indorsed by the Special Group, provided a program divided into four parts to bring about the replacement of the Castro regime by covert means:

- a. The creation of a responsible and unified Cuban opposition to the Castro regime located outside of Cuba.
- b. The development of means for mass communication to the Cuban people as a part of a powerful propaganda offensive.
- c. The creation and development of a covert intelligence and action organization within Cuba which would be responsive to the orders and directions of the exile opposition.
- d. The development of a paramilitary force outside of Cuba for future guerrilla action.

2. Since the primary purpose of this study is to examine the paramilitary actions growing out of this program and its successive modifications, the paragraph referring to the paramilitary aspects of the plan is quoted in its entirety:

"d. Preparations have already been made for the development of an adequate paramilitary force outside of Cuba, together with mechanisms for

\* The Special Group, sometimes called the 5412 Committee, consists of a Deputy Under Secretary of State, Deputy Secretary of Defense, Director, Central Intelligence and the Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, and meets weekly to consider covert operations conducted by the CIA under the authority of NSC 5412/2.

Additional material has been released as a result of this review.

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the necessary logistics support of covert military operations on the island. Initially a cadre of leaders will be recruited after careful screening and trained as paramilitary instructors. In a second phase a number of paramilitary cadres will be trained at secure locations outside of the United States so as to be available for immediate deployment into Cuba to organize, train and lead resistance forces recruited there both before and after the establishment of one or more active centers of resistance. The creation of this capability will require a minimum of six months and probably closer to eight. In the meanwhile, a limited air capability for resupply and for infiltration and exfiltration already exists under CIA control and can be rather easily expanded if and when the situation requires. Within two months it is hoped to parallel this with a small air supply capability under deep cover as a commercial operation in another country."

3. It is apparent from the above excerpt that at the time of approval of this document the concept of paramilitary action was limited to the recruitment of a cadre of leaders and the training of a number of paramilitary cadres for subsequent use as guerrillas in Cuba.

4. The CIA began at once to implement the decisions contained in the policy paper on 17 March 1960. A target of 300 men was set for the recruitment of guerrillas to be trained covertly outside the United States. Radio SWAN was installed on Swan Island and ready for broadcasting on 17 May 1960. (See ANNEX 2) Steps were taken to develop the FRD (Frente Revolucionario Democratico) as the Cuban front organization composed of a broad spectrum of Cuban political elements other than Communists and Batistianos. (See ANNEX 3) On August 18th, a progress report was given to the President and the Cabinet, at which time a budget of some \$13 million was approved, as well as the use of Department of Defense personnel and equipment. However, it was specified at this time that no United States military personnel were to be used in a combat status.

5. Sometime in the summer of 1960 the paramilitary concept for the operation began to change. It appears that leaders in the CIA Task Force set up

in January 1960 to direct the project were the first to entertain the thought of a Cuban strike force to land on the Cuban coast in supplementation of the guerrilla action contemplated under the March 17, 1960 paper. These CIA officers began to consider the formation of a small force of infantry (200-300 men) for contingency employment in conjunction with other paramilitary operations, and in June began to form a small Cuban tactical air force. Eventually it was decided to equip this force with B-26 aircraft which had been widely distributed to foreign countries including countries in Latin America.

6. There were ample reasons for this new trend of thought. The air drops into Cuba were not proving effective. There were increasingly heavy shipments of Communist arms to Cuba, accompanied by evidence of increasingly effective control of the civilian population by Castro. The Special Group became aware of these adverse factors which were discussed repeatedly in the Committee meetings during the fall of 1960. The minutes of the conferences indicate a declining confidence in the effectiveness of guerrilla efforts alone to overthrow Castro.

7. In this atmosphere the CIA began to implement the new concept, increasing the size of the Cuban force in training and reorienting the training toward preparation for its use as an assault force on the Cuban coast. On November 4th, CIA in Washington dispatched a cable to the project officer in Guatemala describing what was wanted. (See ANNEX 4) The cable directed a reduction of the guerrilla teams in training to 60 men and the introduction of conventional training for the remainder as an amphibious and airborne assault force. From that time on, the training emphasis was placed on the assault mission and there is no evidence that the members of the assault force received any further preparation for guerrilla-type operations. The men became deeply imbued with the importance of the landing operation and its superiority over any form of guerrilla action to the point that it would have been difficult later to persuade them to return to a guerrilla-type mission. The final training of the Cubans was done by [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] in

Guatemala where 400-500 Cubans had been assembled.

8. As mentioned in paragraph 5 above, in order to prepare for this operation, the CIA had been obliged early to organize a task force for planning the operation, and then later was to adjust that organization to the execution phase. (See ANNEXES 5 & 6) In both phases the task force commander, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] reported upward through Mr. R. M. Bissell, Deputy Director, Plans to General C. P. Cabell, Deputy Director of Central Intelligence and the Director, Mr. Allen Dulles. The latter, while accepting full responsibility for the operation, generally did not inject himself into military operational matters.

9. During the early months of the development of the plan, the Director, CIA looked to the 5412 Committee (Special Group) for guidance and approval of his covert plans for Cuba. In the period December 10, 1960 to February 8, 1961, former Ambassador Whiting Willauer and Mr. Tracy Barnes of CIA were charged with keeping the President and the Secretary of State informed. By the end of January following the change in administration, the President assisted by a restricted group of advisors from the National Security Council took over the function of approval and the 5412 Committee tended to recede from a position of responsibility. However, the Director of Central Intelligence continued to keep the Committee informed of the covert aspects of the plan.

10. The Director of Central Intelligence briefed the President on the new paramilitary concept on 29 November 1960 and received the indication that the President wished the project expedited. The concept was formally presented to the Special Group on December 8, 1960. At this meeting, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] in charge of the paramilitary section for the Cuba project, described the new concept as one consisting of an amphibious landing on the Cuban coast of 600-750 men equipped with weapons of extraordinarily heavy fire power. The landing would be preceded by preliminary air strikes launched from Nicaragua against military targets. Air strikes as well as supply flights would continue after the landing. The objective would be to seize, hold a

limited area in Cuba, maintain a visible presence, and then to draw dissident elements to the landing force, which hopefully would trigger a general uprising. This amphibious landing would not entirely eliminate the previous concept for infiltrating guerrilla teams. It was expected that some 60-80 men would be infiltrated prior to the amphibious landing.

11. The Special Group was also briefed on the quality of the Cuban force in training in Guatemala. Lt. Colonel Frank Egan, the Army officer on duty with CIA in charge of training, described the superior characteristics of the individuals, particularly as to motivation, intelligence, and leadership qualities. He expressed the opinion that such a force would have no difficulty inflicting heavy casualties on a much larger militia force.

12. There is no evidence that the Special Group formally approved this plan at the time but the CIA representatives were encouraged to continue in its development. A comment was made at the meeting that the existence of the U.S.-backed force of Cubans in training was well known throughout Latin America.

13. During this period the CIA Task Force headquarters for the project was developing a detailed operation plan to support the new concept. It is referred to in this study as Operation TRINIDAD, named after the Cuban town on the southeast coast which was to be the site of the amphibious landing. On January 11th, Ambassador Willauer representing State and Mr. Barnes of CIA first discussed with representatives of the Joint Staff the over-all problem of effecting the overthrow of Castro. As a result, a working committee including representation of CIA, State, Defense, and the JCS was formed to coordinate future actions in pursuit of this objective. At this meeting the TRINIDAD Plan as such was not discussed.

14. At about this time, the change in the national administration produced a break in the continuity of the development of the plan. On January 22nd, several members of the new administration including Mr. Rusk, Mr. McNamara, Mr. Bowles, and Mr. Robert Kennedy were introduced to the Cuba project at a briefing at the State Department. General Lemnitzer and Mr. Dulles were also

present. A Joint Staff concept was presented by General Lemnitzer of the U.S. directed or supported actions in ascending order necessary to overthrow Castro.

15. Early in January, the Joint Chiefs of Staff decided that there was need for an over-all United States plan of action for the overthrow of Castro and produced a paper, JCSM-44-61 (See Annex 7), in which they recommended the institution of an interdepartmental group to consider various courses of action in ascending degree of U.S. involvement, which, after approval by the President, would become an over-all plan to be supported by subordinate plans prepared by the agencies concerned. This recommendation reached the Secretary of Defense, but appears to have been lost in the activities arising out of the change in administration.

16. On November 18, 1960, President-elect Kennedy had first learned of the existence of a plan for the overthrow of Castro through a call on him at Palm Beach by Mr. Dulles and Mr. Bissell. He received his first briefing on the developing plan as President on January 28 at a meeting which included the Vice President, Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense, the Director of Central Intelligence, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Assistant Secretary Mann, Assistant Secretary Nitze, Mr. Tracy Barnes, and Mr. McGeorge Bundy. (See ANNEX 8) After considerable discussion, the President authorized the following:

a. A continuation and accentuation of current activities of the CIA, including increased propaganda, increased political action, and increased sabotage. Continued overflights of Cuba were specifically authorized.

b. The Defense Department was to review CIA proposals for the active deployment of anti-Castro Cuban forces on Cuban territory and the results of this analysis were to be promptly reported to the CIA.

c. The State Department was to prepare a concrete proposal for action with other Latin American countries to isolate the Castro regime and to bring against it the judgment of the Organization of American States. It

was expected that this proposal would involve a commitment of the President's personal authority behind a special mission or missions to such Latin American leaders as Lleras, Betancourt, and Quadros.

17. Following this meeting, the Joint Chiefs of Staff undertook to evaluate Plan TRINIDAD in the form developed by the CIA up to that point. The Chiefs approved and forwarded to the Secretary of Defense on 3 February 1961, JCSM-57-61, "Military Evaluation of the CIA Paramilitary Plan - Cuba." (See ANNEX 9) The evaluation was summarized in paragraphs 1 p and 1 q as follows: "In summary, evaluation of the current plan results in a favorable assessment, modified by the specific conclusions set forth above, of the likelihood of achieving initial military success. It is obvious that ultimate success will depend upon political factors, i.e., a sizeable popular uprising or substantial follow-on forces. It should be noted that assessment of the combat worth of assault forces is based upon second- and third-hand reports, and certain logistic aspects of the plan are highly complex and critical to the initial success. For these reasons, an independent evaluation of the combat effectiveness of the invasion force and detailed analysis of logistics plans should be made by a team of Army, Naval and Air Force officers, if this can be done without danger of compromise of the plan. Despite the shortcomings pointed out in the assessment, the Joint Chiefs of Staff consider that timely execution of this plan has a fair chance of ultimate success and, even if it does not achieve immediately the full results desired, could contribute to the eventual overthrow of the Castro regime."

18. Because of the feeling of lack of direct knowledge expressed by the Chiefs, it was decided to send a team of three officers from the Joint Staff to examine and report on the military effectiveness of the Cuban Expeditionary Force at its Guatemala base. This visit was made in the period 24-27 February and resulted in a report to the Joint Chiefs of Staff (See ANNEX 10) which included the estimate that because of the visibility of activities at Retalhuleu in Guatemala and Puerto Cabezas in Nicaragua, the odds against surprise being achieved was about 85 to 15. The JCS air evaluation pointed out that if surprise were not achieved, the attack against Cuba would fail, adding that one

Castro aircraft armed with 50 caliber machine guns could sink all or most of the invasion force. The Joint Chiefs in approving this report on 10 March 1961 commented to the Secretary of Defense that, "Based upon a general review of the military portion of the plan, an evaluation of the combat effectiveness of the forces and an analysis of the logistics plan from a military standpoint, since the small invasion force will retain the initiative until the location of the landing is determined, the plan could be expected to achieve initial success. Ultimate success will depend on the extent to which the initial assault serves as a catalyst for further action on the part of anti-Castro elements throughout Cuba." The Joint Chiefs of Staff in their forwarding memorandum to the Secretary of Defense recommended that, "A military instructor experienced in the operational logistics be assigned to the training unit immediately for the final phase of the training." Such an officer, Lt. Colonel Ray Wall, USMC, was dispatched from Washington and remained with the CEF (Cuban Expeditionary Force) for some time, assisting in correcting some of the logistics deficiencies previously noted by the inspection team.

19. While the Joint Chiefs of Staff supported the TRINIDAD Plan as one having "a fair chance of success" the plan encountered difficulties in other quarters. From its inception the plan had been developed under the ground rule that it must retain a covert character, that is, it should include no action which, if revealed, could not be plausibly denied by the United States and should look to the world as an operation exclusively conducted by Cubans. This ground rule meant, among other things, that no U.S. military forces or individuals could take part in combat operations. In due course it was extended to exclude pre-D-Day air strikes in support of the landing since such strikes could not have the appearance of being launched from Cuban soil before an airstrip had been seized by the landing force. This effort to treat as covert an operation which in reality could not be concealed or shielded from the presumption of U.S. involvement raised in due course many serious obstacles to the successful conduct of the operation which will be the subject of subsequent comment.

- 20. The President and his advisors were thoroughly aware of the difficulties of preserving the covert character of an operation as visible as a landing on a hostile shore and from the outset viewed the TRINIDAD Plan with caution. In particular, the State Department representatives opposed features of the plan because of the difficulty of concealing U.S. participation and also because of their fear of adverse reactions to the United States in Latin American countries and in the United Nations. They objected in particular to the conduct of any tactical air operations unless these aircraft were either actually or ostensibly based on Cuban soil.

21. On the other hand, working to overcome this reluctance to approve the TRINIDAD Plan was the need to decide quickly what to do with the Cuban Expeditionary Force. The President was informed that this force must leave Guatemala within a limited time and that, further, it could not be held together long in the United States if it were moved there. If the decision were taken to disband the force, that fact would soon become known and would be interpreted as a renunciation by the U.S. of the effort to free Cuba from Castro. Faced with two unattractive alternatives, the President and his advisors asked the CIA to come up with various proposals for the use of this force as alternatives to TRINIDAD.

22. These proposals were the subject of detailed consideration on March 11th when the President and the National Security Council met to consider the various plans then being entertained for Cuba. Mr. Bissell of CIA presented a paper entitled, "Proposed Operation Against Cuba" which summarized the action to date and presented four alternative courses of action. (See ANNEX 11) It concluded by recommending the TRINIDAD Plan which he described to be an operation in the form of an assault in force preceded by a diversionary landing as the action having the best chance of achieving the desired result. The assault in force was to consist of an amphibious/airborne assault with concurrent (but no prior) tactical air support, to seize a beachhead contiguous to terrain suitable for guerrilla operations. The provisional government would land as soon as the beachhead had been secured. If initial military operations were successful

and especially if there were evidence of spreading disaffection against the Castro regime, the provisional government could be recognized and a legal basis provided for U.S. logistic support.

23. The military plan contemplated the holding of a perimeter around a beach-head area. It was believed that initial attacks by the Castro militia, even if conducted in considerable force, could be successfully resisted. The scale of the operation, a display of professional competence and determination on the part of the assault force would, it was hoped, demoralize the Castro militia, cause defections therefrom, impair the morale of the Castro regime and induce widespread rebellion.

24. After full discussion of this plan the President indicated that he was willing to go ahead with the over-all project, but that he could not indorse a plan so "spectacular" as TRINIDAD. He directed that the CIA planners come up with other alternative methods of employing the Cuban forces. An acceptable plan should provide for a "quiet" landing, preferably at night, without having the appearance of a World War II type amphibious assault. The State Department requested that any beachhead seized should include an airfield capable of supporting B-26 operations, to which any tactical air operations could be attributed.

25. During the period 13 - 15 March the paramilitary staff of CIA worked intensively to devise a plan or plans having the desired characteristics, and presented a briefing to the JCS Working Group late in the morning of March 14. They produced for consideration three such alternatives as general concepts. They were based on three possible landing areas: (1) The Preston area on the north coast of Oriente Province; (2) the south coast of las Villas between Trinidad and Cienfuegos; and (3) the eastern ZAPATA area near Cochinos Bay.

26. On March 14th these three alternatives were referred to the Joint Chiefs of Staff for their evaluation. The Joint Staff prepared this evaluation, the results of which the respective Service action officers presented to their respective Chiefs prior to the JCS meeting on 15 March. At this meeting,

following a briefing by the Joint Staff Working Group, the Joint Chiefs approved the evaluation and reported to the Secretary of Defense that of the three, the ZAPATA concept was considered the most feasible and the most likely to accomplish the objective. They added that none of the alternative concepts were considered as feasible and likely to accomplish the objective as the TRINIDAD Plan. (See ANNEX 12) This preference for the TRINIDAD Operation seemed to have been overlooked in the subsequent consideration of the plan by some of the senior civilian officials, including the Secretary of Defense to whom the views of the Chiefs were addressed.

27. An important question developed in the course of this study is the extent to which the Joint Chiefs of Staff approved the ZAPATA Plan as it finally took form. The action on March 15th merely indicated a preference for the ZAPATA concept as opposed to the two other concepts considered (neither of which was the original TRINIDAD Plan.) However, the record is clear (See ANNEX 13) that the Chiefs subsequently took active part in considering changes to the plan as it developed into final form, did not oppose the plan and by their acquiescing in it gave others the impression of approval. They considered the plan as a body four times after March 15th while the plan was in the formative stage, but did not review the plan in its final form because of the shortness of time between the submission of the plan to the JCS, April 15, and the actual landing. While individual Chiefs gave it considerably more personal attention than the above record suggests, they did not and probably could not give the plan the same meticulous study which a commander would give to a plan for which he was personally responsible. Also, individual Chiefs had differing views as to important aspects of the operations which in turn differed from those held by senior civilian officials.

28. On the same day as the Chiefs' action, March 15th, the President was briefed at the White House on the three alternative courses of action which the Chiefs had considered. After full discussion, the President again withheld approval of the plan and directed certain modifications to be considered.

The CIA returned on the following day, March 16th, and presented a modification for the landing at Zapata which Mr. Bissell considered on balance more advantageous than the TRINIDAD Plan, wherein there would be air drops at first light instead of the previous day in the late afternoon, with the landing in the night and all the ships withdrawn from the objective area by dawn without completing the unloading at that time. The President authorized them to proceed with the plan, but still without giving it his formal approval.

29. As the TRINIDAD Plan developed, the question of air strikes became a matter of extended discussions. On January 4th, Colonel Hawkins wrote a memorandum to the Chief, WH/4 (Mr. Esterline) entitled, "Policy Decisions Required for Conduct of Strike Operations Against Government of Cuba." (See ANNEX 14) The paper includes the statement, "The Cuban air force and naval vessels capable of opposing our landing must be knocked out or neutralized before our amphibious shipping makes its final run into the beach. If this is not done we will be courting disaster." The memorandum further recommended that the air preparation commence not later than dawn on D-1 and that a maximum number of aircraft be employed for this purpose. The State Department consistently resisted this kind of air preparation because of its "spectacular" nature and because of the inability to attribute pre-D-Day strikes to airplanes in Cuba. They also opposed the use of jets, although former Ambassador Whiting Willauer, who with Mr. Tracy Barnes monitored the plan in the period December 10 - February 8, 1961 at the request of Secretary of State Herter, had pointed out the need for jet cover to protect the landing in discussions of the Special Group in January. It was felt that the range of jets would obviously require them to operate from U.S.-controlled bases and hence could not be brought within the requirements of non-attribution.

30. In the end a compromise was reached with regard to the air plan. Early in April, it was decided to stage limited air strikes on D-2 at the time of a diversionary landing of 160 men to be made in eastern Cuba. These strikes were for the purpose of giving the impression of being the action of Cuban pilots

[REDACTED]

defecting from the Cuban Air Force and thus support the fiction that the D-Day landing was receiving its air support from within Cuba. The Joint Chiefs of Staff did not favor these D-2 air strikes because of their indecisive nature and the danger of alerting prematurely the Castro force. Mr. Bissell of CIA also later stated at a meeting on April 6 that CIA would prefer to conduct an all-out air strike on the morning of D-Day rather than perform the D-2 defection strikes followed by limited strikes on D-Day. Nevertheless, the political advantages led to their inclusion in the plan but with the realization that main reliance for the destruction of the Castro Air Force must be placed on the D-Day strikes.

31. At the time of the meeting with the President on 16 March, preparations in the field were proceeding on the assumption that the landing would take place. The President agreed to this procedure but reserved the right to call off the plan even up to 24 hours prior to the landing. He approved the establishment of an interdepartmental working group to carry forward the work begun in January (see paragraph 13 above) and to assure closer coordination within the Executive Branch. On 23 March this working group produced a paper containing agreed tasks prepared by the Joint Staff for assignment to the various agencies of the Federal Government. (See ANNEX 15) This paper was the first successful action to formalize the interdepartmental coordination which up to this point had depended largely upon ad hoc committees and meetings at Presidential level. Because of the high security classification of the operations, few if any records were kept at these meetings and decisions were rarely in written form. Papers bearing on the operation were normally distributed at the start of a meeting and gathered up at the end.

32. Initially, the ZAPATA Plan had a D-Day of 5 April. By 29 March it was apparent that no such D-Day could be kept and the President on that day advanced it to 10 April. This date later became infeasible for political reasons so that it slipped again to 17 April, the date of the actual landing.

33. On 12 April an important conference took place with the President, the Secretary of State, the JCS, and other NSC officials, in which Mr. Bissell of the CIA presented a paper which outlined the latest changes in the ZAPATA Operation, including the defections, the air strikes on D-2 and D-Day (See ANNEX 16), and the following timetable:

D-7	Commence staging main force - staging completed night of D-5
D-6	First vessel sails from staging area - last vessel departs early morning D-4
D-2	B-26 defection operation - limited air strikes
D-2	Diversionary landing in Oriente (night of D-3 to D-2)
D-Day	Main landings (night of D-1 to D) - limited air strikes. Two B-26's and liaison plane land on seized air strip.
D to D+1	Vessels return night of D to D+1 to complete discharge of supplies.
D+7	Diversionary landing in Pinar del Rio.

The President did not give final approval to the plan at this meeting. However, he was informed that the decision could not be delayed much longer as the no-go time for preliminary operations would be 12 o'clock Friday, 14 April, and for the main landing, 12 o'clock Sunday, 16 April.

34. Colonel Jack Hawkins, USMC, went to Puerto Cabezas to attend the final briefing of the Brigade and battalion commanders of the CEF. (See ANNEX 17) While there, on 13 April he was asked for a final evaluation of the quality and readiness of the Brigade. He replied in most enthusiastic terms (See ANNEX 18), praising the combat readiness of the Brigade and the Cuban Air Force, and expressing confidence in the success of the project. His views were circulated in Washington and reached the President.

35. Meanwhile, the ships of the invading force were approaching Cuba. The first operational event scheduled to occur was a diversionary landing 30 miles east of Guantanamo by a group of 160 men planned for the night of 14-15 April. The landing failed to take place, probably because of weak leadership on the part of the Cuban officer responsible for the landing. This failure may have

had a considerable affect on the main landing as the diversion was intended to draw Castro's forces to the east and confuse his command.

36. At dawn on 15 April, the D-2 air strike took place against three Cuban air fields, a total of eight B-26's being employed for the purpose. Initial pilot reports indicated that 50% of Castro's offensive air was destroyed at Campa Libertad, 75% - 80% aircraft destruction at San Antonio de Los Banos, and that the destruction at Santiago included two B-26's, one DC-3, one Lode-star and one T-33 or Sea Fury. Subsequent photographic studies and interpretation have assessed a greatly reduced estimate of the damage, amounting to five aircraft definitely destroyed and an indeterminable number of other planes suffering some damage. The attacking force lost one aircraft and crew to antiaircraft fire.

37. At about mid-day on D-1, 16 April, the President formally approved the landing plan and the word was passed to all commanders and officials involved in the operation. The frame of mind at that moment of the senior officials responsible for the approval of this operation seems to have been about as follows. It offered what appeared to be a last chance to overthrow Castro by Cubans before the weapons and technicians acquired from the Communists and repressive internal measures would make the task too hard without overt U.S. intervention. It was recognized as marginal and risky, but the Cuban Brigade, if not used quickly, would become a political liability, whereas used in a landing it might achieve important success before Castro became too strong. Even if unable to hold the beachhead, something would have been accomplished as the Brigade could turn guerrilla and provide a strong reinforcement to the resistance movement in the island.

38. CIA authorities had developed an elaborate propaganda program (See ANNEX 19) to support the military action against Castro. This was based on the use of the clandestine radio SWAN, the programs of 11 CIA controlled radio stations and extensive leaflet drops. The program was executed as planned, except for the D-day leaflet drops for which no means of delivery

was available. The plan had been to drop the leaflets from B-26's and other aircraft involved in the support of the landing, but the military situation did not permit the diversion of effort. The content of the propaganda program was developed and approved within CIA.

39. There is no evidence of any effort at any higher level to guide and coordinate the over-all propaganda effort. In particular, the United States Information Agency was left in the dark with regard to the operational plans. On 5 April, Mr. Edward R. Murrow, Director of the United States Information Agency heard from a New York Times reporter that operations were underway for a landing in Cuba, backed and planned by the CIA. The reporter indicated that the Times had a very full story on the operation which, however, they did not intend to print but he did hope to persuade USIA to authorize briefings of the press in Miami following the landing. (See ANNEX 20)

40. Armed with this information, Mr. Murrow called on the Director of Central Intelligence who informed him that preparations were indeed underway, but did not give him details of the magnitude or the time of the landing which, indeed, had not been determined at that time. Under the terms of the interdepartmental coordination paper referred to in paragraph 31 above, the Department of State undertook to provide policy guidance beginning D-3 to the USIA in support of the plan, but this guidance was apparently not given. Hence, word of the landing received over the wire services on D-Day caught the USIA unprepared and without guidance.

41. In parallel with its propaganda program, the CIA had continued and accentuated activities directed at stimulating political unrest in Cuba and harassing the Castro government. These actions included such things as clandestine broadcasts in Havana utilizing dormant TV channels, the infiltration of small provocateur groups equipped with printing presses and radios, the development of additional agent and guerrilla assets within the island, and the penetration of pro-Castro organizations.

42. With regard to agent, guerrilla, and dissident assets, the pre-invasion reports differed somewhat but suggested considerable strength. (See ANNEX 20 A, Cuban Internal Situation 18 May 1961, and ANNEX 20 B, Map showing agents and assets) It had been estimated by the CIA that from 2500 to 3000 persons supported by 20,000 sympathizers were actively engaged in resistance in Cuba, and that some 25 per cent of the Cuban populace would actively support a well-organized, well-armed force which was successful in establishing a stronghold on the island. At a CIA briefing on April 3, the view was expressed that the percentage of the Cuban population opposed to Castro at that time was much higher than the foregoing estimate, but that many would probably remain neutral until there was a strong indication of which side was winning.

43. At about 9:30 P.M. on 16 April, Mr. McGeorge Bundy, Special Assistant to the President, telephoned General C. P. Cabell of CIA to inform him that the dawn air strikes the following morning should not be launched until they could be conducted from a strip within the beachhead. Mr. Bundy indicated that any further consultation with regard to this matter should be with the Secretary of State.

44. General Cabell, accompanied by Mr. Bissell, went at once to Secretary Rusk's office, arriving there about 10:15 P.M. (See ANNEX 21) There they received a telephone call from Colonel Jack Hawkins who, having learned of the cancellation of the D-Day strikes, called to present his view of the gravity of the decision. General Cabell and Mr. Bissell then tried to persuade the Secretary of State to permit the dawn D-Day strikes. The Secretary indicated that there were policy considerations against air strikes before the beachhead airfield was in the hands of the landing force and completely operational, capable of supporting the raids. The two CIA representatives pointed out the risk of loss to the shipping if the Castro Air Force were not neutralized by the dawn strikes. They also stressed the difficulty which the B-26 airplanes would have in isolating the battlefield after the landing, as well as the heavier scale of air attack to which the disembarked forces would be exposed. The Secretary of State indicated subsequently that their presentation led him

to feel that while the air strikes were indeed important, they were not vital. However, he offered them the privilege of telephoning the President in order to present their views to him. They saw no point in speaking personally to the President and so informed the Secretary of State. The order cancelling the D-Day strikes was dispatched to the departure field in Nicaragua, arriving when the pilots were in their cockpits ready for take-off. The Joint Chiefs of Staff learned of the cancellation at varying hours the following morning.

45. Realizing the seriousness of this cancellation, the CIA officials set about to try to offset the damage. The invasion force was informed, warned of likely air attacks and the ships told to expedite unloading and to withdraw from the beach by dawn. A continuous cover of 2 B-26's over the beach was laid on. General Cabell arranged with the JCS to alert the fleet to a possible requirement for air cover and Early Warning destroyers. At 0430, he called on the Secretary of State at his home, reiterated the need to protect the shipping and by telephone made the request to the President. The request for air cover was disapproved ~~by~~ <sup>but</sup> the Early Warning destroyers were authorized, provided they remained at least 30 miles from Cuban territory.

### II. The Battle for the Beachhead, D-Day to D+2

(See ANNEX 22 entitled, "Sequence of Events D-2 to D+2 and Organization and Operation of the Command Post"; Operation Maps 1-3; and ANNEX 23, Colonel Beerli's Memorandum of 26 April 1961)

#### D-Day

#### Blue Beach

46. The ships in which the Cuban Expeditionary Force was embarked reached the objective area generally on time in the night of D-1 and the morning of D-Day. At Blue Beach the Brigade Commander, Jose Perez San Roman, went ashore at 0115 and immediately commenced the unloading of troops and supplies. (See ANNEXES 24, 25 and 26) The landing was discovered at once by local militia, some firing occurred, and the alarm was transmitted to troop and air headquarters throughout the island. In view of the situation, it was decided to

give up the planned transshipment of the force earmarked to Green Beach and to put this force ashore at Blue Beach.

47. Castro's forces, though tactically surprised, reacted with speed and vigor. At dawn they began air attacks against the shipping and the beaches. In spite of these attacks, all vehicles and tanks at Blue Beach were unloaded from the LCU's by 0730, and all troops were ashore by 0825.

48. At 0930 an enemy Sea Fury hit and sunk the freighter RIO ESCONDIDO, which carried in it 10 days' supply of ammunition for the Brigade and other valuable supplies. All crew members were rescued and transferred to the BLAGAR.

49. In the face of continuous air attacks, at 10 o'clock ----- the contract skipper in charge of the shipping, radioed CIA Headquarters that if jet air support were not immediately available, the ships would put out to sea. By this time, not only had the RIO been sunk at Blue Beach, but the HOUSTON had been hit at Red Beach. CIA Headquarters approved the movement of the vessels to the south which began at once. The freighters ATLANTICO and CARIBE preceded the two LCI's and three LCU's which followed the cargo ships at a slower speed imposed by the presence of the LCU's.

50. After landing, the troops ashore pushed out from the beach as planned. Parachutists of the First Battalion dropped at 0730, seized the important road center of San Blas 10 miles northeast of Blue Beach, and established outposts to the north and east to cover the routes of ingress into the beachhead. They were quickly reinforced by the Third Battalion and a heavy weapons (4.2 mortars) detachment. They made contact with Castro forces in the afternoon which pushed back their outpost situated to the east. Starting at about 1700 and intermittently thereafter, San Blas was under attack from forces coming down the road from the north.

51. Radio communications within Blue Beach were non-existent during the entire operation. In going ashore, the troops had been obliged to wade through fairly deep water with the result that most of the portable radios got wet and never functioned thereafter.

Red Beach

52. The Second Battalion at Red Beach ran into militia units almost immediately upon landing, but cleared them from the beach area. The landing of the Battalion was slowed down by motor trouble with the aluminum ships' boats which were the only landing craft available. Out of nine, only two boats were usable for the 20-minute run from the HOUSTON to the beach. The Fifth Battalion which was to follow the Second never did get ashore, partly because of the boat troubles, partly because of lack of initiative on the part of the Battalion Commander. Very few supplies were got ashore, other than those carried by the Second Battalion while debarking.

53. At daybreak, Red Beach was attacked by enemy aircraft, and at about 0630 the HOUSTON was hit. Somewhat later, the ship went aground on the west shore of the Bahia de Cochinos about five miles from the landing beach. At that time it still had on board about 180 men of the Fifth Battalion who landed but never got into the fight at Red Beach. Later, many worked their way south to be picked up on the swampy keys by the U.S. Navy after the operation. In this air attack, the LCI BARBARA J was also damaged by machine gun fire which disabled two of its engines, and a near miss, which caused it to take water. The damage to the BARBARA J was not reported to CIA Headquarters until the next day at about 1700.

54. After cleaning up the beach area, the troops of the Second Battalion pushed north about four miles but soon encountered militia forces which prevented them from reaching the southern exit of the road across the swamp which they were to block. Fighting went on astride the road throughout the day, enemy tanks appearing in mid-afternoon and enemy artillery becoming active at about 1800.

Air Action

55. The parachute drops made by 5 C-46's and one C-54 took place at 0730 on D-Day. Indications are that the drops were reasonably accurate but considerable ammunition was lost near San Blas. The parachutists north of Red Beach apparently landed in the presence of the enemy and were not heard from thereafter. A total of 172 parachutists took part in the drops.

56. B-26 aircraft rotated over the beachhead through D-Day, sank one gunboat, and made effective strikes against enemy ground troops at Red Beach, inflicting several hundred casualties, according to report. In all, a total of 13 combat sorties were flown on D-Day, in the course of which 4 B-26's were lost to enemy T-33 action. In the same period, the Castro air force lost 2 Sea Furies and 2 B-26's to antiaircraft fire.

57. Impressed by the ease with which the T-33 aircraft could destroy the obsolete B-26 type aircraft, the CIA leaders decided to attempt, by a bombing attack, to destroy the remaining Castro aircraft at night on the ground. Six aircraft were scheduled to strike San Antonio de los Banos, believed to be the main base of operations, in two waves of three each during the night of 17-18 April. The mission was flown but was unsuccessful because of heavy haze and low clouds over the target.

58. Because of the developing shortage of ammunition in the beachhead at the end of D-Day, an air supply drop was arranged consisting of four C-54's and two C-46's. Of these drops, five were successful, but in one case most of the supplies drifted into the water from which only a part could be salvaged.

D+1

59. During the night of D-Day-D+1, the invasion shipping departing from the landing area for the south proceeded to a point about 50 miles off the Cuban coast. Here the two LCI's and three LCU's rendezvoused as directed, but the two freighters, the ATLANTICO and the CARIBE continued south without pausing. They did not turn back until intercepted and encouraged to return by the United States Navy, the ATLANTICO some 110 miles to the south, and the CARIBE 218 miles south of the Cuban coast. Thus, the CARIBE was never available for resupply operations while the fight on the beach lasted and the ATLANTICO did not get back to the rendezvous point until 1645 on D+1, 18 April.

Red Beach

60. The troops north of Red Beach came under heavy attack during the early hours of D+1. At 0300 enemy tanks were reported approaching from the north

and by 0730 the situation was so difficult that the decision was made to move the force to Blue Beach. This movement began at 0900 and was completed about 1030. By that time, ammunition was low in the Red Beach force, but casualties, about 20, were comparatively light.

61. After reaching Blue Beach, the retreating force was allowed about two hours of rest, after which they were given additional ammunition and ordered back toward Red Beach in order to block the coast road to the movement of the force with which they had been engaged in the Red Beach area. They encountered this force somewhere west of Blue Beach and heavy fighting ensued. Exactly what occurred is not known, but it is assumed that the invaders eventually succumbed to the superior numbers of Castro forces moving down from the north.

#### Blue Beach

62. Enemy artillery fire began falling on the troops in the San Blas area at 0400 and continued most of the day. In the absence of radio communication, it was necessary to send officer couriers from the San Blas area to Blue Beach in order to communicate with the Brigade Commander who had set up his command post on the beach. At 0730 Roberto San Roman, brother of the Brigade Commander, went back to the beach for this purpose, reporting the situation around San Blas and seeking information. The Brigade Commander at that time indicated that the situation at Red Beach was critical. In order to cover Blue Beach, he had stationed some of his reserve forces to the east blocking the coast road coming from that direction and others to the northwest to cover the approaches from that quarter.

63. During the day artillery fire and enemy pressure on the San Blas forces compelled a gradual contraction of their position around the town. They attempted a counterattack to the north in the afternoon, but it soon bogged down in the face of superior forces.

64. By the end of the day, ammunition was very low throughout the beachhead. Only M-1 ammunition seems to have been reasonably plentiful, although the commander of the Heavy Weapons Company indicates that he was never out of 4.2 mortar ammunition. He indicates, however, that it was necessary to ration it

carefully. In spite of the heavy fighting, there appeared to have been surprisingly few casualties among the invaders.

65. In the evening, the Brigade Commander was asked by CIA Headquarters via the BLAGAR whether he wished evacuation. He replied, "I will not be evacuated. We will fight to the end here if we have to."

Air Action

66. On D+1 it became necessary to utilize some American civilian contract pilots to protect the beachhead area because some of the Cuban pilots either were too tired to fly or refused to do so. Six sorties were flown during the afternoon of D+1, attacking a long column of tanks and vehicles approaching Blue Beach along the coast road from the north. The attack was reported to have been very successful with an estimated 1800 casualties inflicted on the enemy and the destruction of 7 tanks. Napalm was used in these attacks, as well as bombs and rockets.

D+2

67. As events turned out, the night of D+1/D+2 offered the last opportunity to get ammunition to the beach. The ATLANTICO had returned from its trek to the south, rendezvousing with the other ships about 50 miles off the coast at 1645 on D+1. It began discharging cargo at once into the LCU's, completing the transfer at 2200, at which time \_\_\_\_\_ reported to CIA Headquarters that the LCI BLAGAR would escort the LCU's to Blue Beach unless otherwise advised. He indicated that his estimated time of arrival on the beach would be 0630, that is to say, dawn on D+2.

68. The BLAGAR began to move northward with the three LCU's, reporting to CIA Headquarters, however, that if low jet cover were not furnished by first light, the Captain believed that he would lose all the ships. Prior to this time he had requested the escort of a U.S. Navy destroyer. At 2145 CIA Headquarters wired the BLAGAR that a destroyer escort was not possible, to which message the Captain replied that if he could not get destroyer escort in and out of Blue Beach, his Cuban crew would mutiny. At CIA Headquarters in Washington these

messages were discussed and the critical decision was taken to stop the northern movement of the ammunition ships and direct them to rendezvous some 60 miles south of the Cuban coast.

69. The reasons for this decision appear to have been as follows. The CIA leaders in Washington were aware of the liberal amount of ammunition (3 days' supply) which had been taken ashore on D-Day and also of the air drops on the night of D+1. (See ANNEX 27) Further, they had ordered additional drops on the night of D+1/D+2. Considering the climate in which this operation had been planned in Washington, the CIA leaders apparently felt that it was hopeless to ask for either destroyer escort or jet cover for the ammunition convoy. Without this overt U.S. support, it was felt that the loss of the ships would be inevitable if they tried to run in in daylight -- if, indeed, they could get the Cuban crews to make the attempt. Under these circumstances, they felt justified in calling off the sea resupply effort and made no further attempt beyond an arrangement for another air drop to get in ammunition before the final surrender. Except for one C-46 which landed on the Blue Beach airstrip, the attempt to resupply by air was unsuccessful because of enemy control of the air over the beachhead.

70. Although permission was not sought for jet escort for the ammunition ships, Mr. Bissell of CIA sought and received Presidential authority to have the Navy to fly CAP over the beachhead from 0630 to 0730 on the morning of D+2. The purpose of this mission was to allow the B-26's to provide close support to the troops in the beachhead and cover for air resupply. This CAP was flown but, as indicated below, was of no avail.

71. Within the beachhead, the troops in the San Blas area began a general retreat in the morning of D+2. The last message received from the Brigade Commander by the BLAGAR at 1432 read: "Am destroying all equipment and communications. I have nothing left to fight with. Am taking to the woods. I can't wait for you." Units and individuals arriving at Blue Beach shortly thereafter found the Brigade Command Post gone and heavy artillery fire falling in the vicinity. Pressure on the beachhead was coming from the north and the northwest. The last known report

on the situation indicates that at 1700 Blue Beach was still clear of the enemy. It appears that fighting ceased shortly thereafter and by nightfall resistance in the beachhead had ended.

Air Action

72. On the morning of D+2 American pilots were again used for the protection of the beachhead. The morning sorties were directed to arrive over the beachhead in the period 6:30 to 7:30 A.M. to take advantage of the one-hour period of Navy cover. For an undetermined reason, they came in almost an hour early with the result that two B-26's were destroyed by the T-33's. A total of 7 sorties were flown on this occasion with undetermined results.

73. As indicated above, three cargo aircraft tried to fly in ammunition on the morning of D+2 but were turned back by the presence of enemy air. A fourth C-46, succeeding in landing on the Blue Beach airstrip in the hours of darkness, unloaded ammunition and picked up a B-26 pilot who had been shot down, departing at daylight. (See ANNEX 28)

74. These sorties ended the action of the invasion force which began stand-down activities thereafter with a total of 21 aircraft still in commission.<sup>74</sup> It is difficult to be sure of the losses suffered by the Castro Air Force. The D-2 air strikes positively destroyed 5 Castro aircraft, with undetermined damage to others, and 4 other combat aircraft were destroyed in the beachhead area.

\*75. It may be asked how near the landing ever came to success. Had the ammunition shortage been surmounted, which is to say, had the Castro air been neutralized, would the landing force have accomplished its mission? Considering

\* Admiral Burke and Mr. Dulles consider that there is insufficient evidence to support the conjectures in this paragraph. The well motivated, aggressive CEF fought extremely well without air cover and with a shortage of ammunition. They inflicted very severe losses on the less well trained Cuban Militia. Consequently, it is reasonable to believe that if the CEF had had ammunition and air cover, they could have held the beachhead for a much longer time, destroyed much of the enemy artillery and tanks on the roads before they reached the beachhead, prevented observation of the fire of the artillery that might have been placed in position and destroyed many more of the local Militia en route to the area. A local success by the landing party, coupled with CEF aircraft overflying Cuba with visible control of the air, could well have caused a chain reaction of success throughout Cuba with resultant defection of some of the Militia, ~~and inspiring~~ the populace and eventual success of the operation.

their lack of experience, the Cubans ashore fought well and inflicted considerable losses on the Castro militia while they had ammunition. Contrary to the view held prior to the landing that with control of the air the CEF could have maintained themselves for some time, with the rapid appearance of the vastly superior Castro forces on the scene, the ultimate success of such a small landing force became very unlikely. The limited number of B-26 crews, if forced to continue to operate from Nicaragua, would have been strained to provide continuous daylight air support to the beachhead. An attempt by the landing force to exercise the guerrilla option and take to the hills would have been virtually impossible because of the presence of the encircling Castro forces and of the instructions which the Cuban invasion units had received to fall back on the beaches in case of a penetration of the beachhead. Under the conditions which developed we are inclined to believe that the beachhead could not have survived long without substantial help from the Cuban population or without overt U.S. assistance. Although under these conditions the guerrilla alternative did not exist, with control of the air the CEF might have been able to withdraw wholly or in part by sea.

III. Involvement of the U.S. Navy

(See Annex 29, Subj: Rules of Engagement Operations "BUMPY ROAD")

76. As originally planned, the only involvement of the U.S. Navy in Operation ZAPATA was the requirement for one destroyer to escort the CEF ships on D-2 and D-1 to the transport area about 3 miles off-shore, and for one LSD to deliver landing craft (3 LCU's and 4 LCVP's) to the transport area. Also, there was the requirement for U.S. Naval air cover over the CEF ships during the hours of daylight on D-1.

77. As the date for the invasion approached, there were numerous discussions of the rules of engagement which would govern the use of Naval units. In final form, the approved rules of engagement allowed the U.S. Naval forces to open fire only if they or the CEF were attacked while under escort, and the escorting destroyers were not to approach within 20 miles of Cuban territory. If it became necessary for U.S. forces to intervene to protect the CEF ships, the

operation would then be automatically cancelled, and the CEF ships would withdraw to a port to be designated by the CIA. Because of concern over the possible abandonment of the operation as the result of U.S. intervention, the Joint Chiefs of Staff at the request of CIA dispatched the following message on April 13 to CINCLANT, Admiral Dennison: "In summary, hope is that over all operations will not need to be aborted because of U.S. military intervention and to this end CEF prepared to take substantive risks."

78. With the cancellation of the D-Day air strikes and the subsequent landing and combat on the beach, the requirements placed upon the U.S. Navy progressively increased. The rules of engagement indicated above remained in effect until 0422R, 17 April, when CINCLANT was directed by JCS 994221 to be prepared to provide CAP for CEF shipping outside territorial waters and Early Warning for CEF ships. This was an anticipatory action by the Joint Chiefs of Staff while the request was being made to the White House for CAP following the cancellation of the D-Day air strikes. Only the employment of an EW vessel was authorized and these instructions were dispatched to CINCLANT at 0550. The rules of engagement for U.S. Naval forces remained the same, except that the EW destroyers were not to close within 30 miles of Cuban territory (i.e., 10 miles farther away than previously authorized.)

79. At 1530, 17 April, based upon a CIA request which had Presidential approval, the JCS directed CINCLANT to establish a safe haven for CEF ships with U.S. Naval air cover over the CEF ships in accordance with the following restrictions:

- "a. Carrier ship operation no closer than 50 miles from Cuban territory.
- "b. Aircraft shall operate no closer than 15 miles to Cuban territory.
- "c. No more than 4 aircraft on station at one time."

Further, CINCLANT was instructed that the rules of engagement were modified as follows:

- "a. U.S. aircraft shall attack if unfriendly aircraft makes aggressive move by opening bomb bay doors when headed towards ship to be protected or start a strafing run on it. Attacks will not be made by U.S. aircraft under any other condition.

- "b. No hot pursuit inside the 15 miles line from Cuban territory.  
"c. U.S. aircraft ship shall not come up close to unfriendly aircraft except when attacking it.  
"d. If unfriendly aircraft is shot down every effort shall be made to hide the fact that such action has occurred."

Note that the above rules of engagement still give a tactical advantage to the attacking Cuban aircraft before they can be taken under fire by the U.S. forces.

80. At 1337R, 18 April, based upon a call from Admiral Burke from the White House, the JCS directed CINCLANT to conduct a photo and visual reconnaissance using unmarked naval aircraft as soon as possible to determine the situation on the beach. The aircraft were authorized to protect themselves from attack and were to take all precautions to avoid being identified as U.S.

81. Based upon a call from Admiral Burke at the White House, the JCS at 1449R, 18 April, directed CINCLANT to prepare unmarked naval planes for possible combat use. The number to be left to CINCLANT's discretion. CINCLANT was advised in this same message that there was no intention of U.S. intervention. These aircraft were made ready but permission was not given to use them.

82. At 1957R, 18 April, the JCS informed CINCLANT of the possibility that C-130 aircraft with U.S. Air Force markings removed might be used for night drops on Blue Beach the night of 18/19 April. These air drops by C-130 were never conducted because the aircraft would have been unable to reach the beach-head prior to dawn.

83. Upon the request of CIA and with the approval of the President after a conference at the White House, the JCS at 0334R, 19 April directed CINCLANT to furnish air cover of 6 unmarked aircraft over CEF forces during the period 0630 to 0730 local time 19 April to defend the CEF against air attack from Castro planes. He was directed to not seek air combat but to defend CEF forces from air attack. Further to not attack ground targets. (Note: The purpose of this CAP was to provide cover to CEF transport and B-26 type aircraft which were due

at the beachhead during this period.) In this same message CINCLANT was directed to be prepared to conduct evacuation from Blue Beach using unmarked amphibious craft with crews in dungarees, and that if the evacuation by U.S. ships were ordered he was to furnish air cover to protect landing craft.

84. At 1157R the JCS confirmed a telephone call to CINCLANT made by Admiral Burke at 1020R upon orders from the White House directing CINCLANT to send two destroyers to a position off Blue Beach to determine possibilities for evacuation. CINCLANT was also directed to fly reconnaissance over the beach to determine the situation. No ground attacks were authorized but active air to air combat was authorized.

85. On 19 April at 1312R, based upon a call from Admiral Burke from the White House, the JCS directed CINCLANT to have destroyers take CEF personnel off the beach and from the water to the limit of their capability; use CEF boats and craft as practicable; provide air cover; if destroyers fired on they are authorized to return the fire to protect themselves while on this humanitarian mission. (Note the reason that amphibious force craft were not used was that PHIBRON 2 had not yet arrived off the objective area.)

86. At 2052R, 19 April, the JCS informed CINCLANT that existing instructions in respect to air and surface protection for CEF ships remain in effect. This was the safe haven for CEF ships 15 miles or more off-shore. No further requirement for an air CAP in the beachhead area.

87. On 20 April, upon direction of the President to Admiral Burke the JCS at 1946R directed CINCLANT:

"a. Take charge of CEF ships and personnel and get them safely to VIEQUES. Navy on scene Commander can relay message to CEF ships via me.

"b. Conduct destroyer patrols off Blue Beach tonight ~~if~~ possible evacuation of survivors and instruct CO he is authorized to ground his ship if it will facilitate mission. Use of amphibious ship and craft authorized in addition to DD if desired. Repeat patrol tomorrow night approaching area in sight of land but outside gun range prior to darkness. Provide air cover. Rules of

**EYE**

Engagement during patrols same as before." These rules are to open fire only in self-defense.

IV. Exercise of Control in Washington

88. The CIA Command Post for Operation ZAPATA as well as the communications center was in Quarters Eye on Ohio Drive. (See ANNEX 30 - Communications Net) During the operation, the Senior CIA Task Force officials, Mr. Esterline, Colonel Hawkins, USMC; Lt. Colonel Gains (USAF) and Captain Jacob Scapa (U.S. Naval officer on loan to the CIA for use as a staff adviser on naval matters) manned the Command Post around the clock, making those operational decisions which they felt within their authority and seeking higher approval from the Secretary of State or the President for those matters beyond their authority. Mr. Bissell and General Cabell, who were immediately available for consultation, were usually the emissaries sent to obtain this latter kind of approval.

89. There was formal and continuous liaison between the CIA Command Post and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. This was effected by an exchange of liaison officers between the Command Post and the Joint Staff (General Gray.) In addition, the Command Post transmitted messages and selected operational cable traffic to the Joint Staff by telephone and TWX. There was telephone and cable contact with CINCLANT.

90. Within the Pentagon, General Gray had a situation briefing in the Joint Staff at 0730 and 1600 daily which the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman, JCS attended. The other Chiefs maintained liaison officers in General Gray's section who kept their seniors informed.

91. The technical performance of the CIA communications net was reported to have been excellent. There was an impressive volume of traffic transmitted over it. Nevertheless, the President, the Secretary of State and others had insufficient knowledge of the situation to react in time and to make the needed decisions. This inadequacy resulted from many factors: the loss of important signal equipment in the sinking of the RIO ESCONDIDO, the wetting of the portable

**EYE ON ZAPATA**

radios carried ashore and the resulting failure of radio communications within the Brigade net ashore, the lack of information on the part of the Brigade Commander himself, and, most importantly, the absence of an experienced American officer or headquarters in the combat area with the responsibility to summarize and present the changing situation to the authorities in Washington.

92. As a result of these factors, the President and his advisors were generally in the dark about important matters as to the situation ashore and were uninformed of the flight of the cargo ships. To clarify the situation, the U.S. Navy was directed to fly a reconnaissance mission over the beach on the afternoon of D+1, reporting about 1900 that there was no evidence of fighting at Blue Beach where the beachhead apparently had a depth of about 10 miles. This was the last indication of the situation ashore which the President received until the following morning when he received the message that the beachhead had collapsed and that men were fighting in the water.

93. In the urgency to obtain reliable information, it was proposed on the morning of D+2 to send an American observer ashore with a radio and Mr. Robertson on the LCI BARBARA J was chosen to go. However, the fall of the beachhead voided the mission.

SECRET

13 June 1961

**Memorandum No. 2**

## **IMMEDIATE CAUSES OF FAILURE OF THE OPERATION ZAPATA**

## SUMMARY

1. The proximate cause of the failure of the ZAPATA Operation was a shortage of ammunition which developed from the first day of the landing, April 17th, and became increasingly critical until it resulted in the surrender of the landing force about 1400 on April 19th.
  2. There were three primary reasons for this shortage of ammunition. The logistical plan for the landing made ample provision for ammunition with the men and in floating reserve. However, upon landing there is evidence that the Cubans wasted their ammunition in excessive firing, displaying the poor ammunition discipline which is common to troops in their first combat.
  3. Far more serious was the loss of the freighters RIO ESCONDIDO and HOUSTON through air attack at about 0930 on the morning of April 17th. The RIO was a particular loss as it had ten days of reserve ammunition on board, as well as other important supplies. The HOUSTON should have been able to land most of its supplies before being hit, but the unloading was delayed by trouble with the outboard motors of the ships' boats as well as by the apparent lethargy of the Fifth Battalion charged with the unloading.
  4. The air attack which sunk these ships caused all others in the landing area to put out to sea, as the only available protection in the absence of control of the air, with the order to rendezvous 50 miles off the coast. The freighters ATLANTICO and CARIBE headed south and never stopped until intercepted by the U.S. Navy at points 110 miles and 218 miles, respectively, south of Cuba.
  5. The CARIBE was so far away that its cargo, principally aviation supplies, was never available for movement to Blue Beach while the fight lasted. The

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**WILLIAMSON BOOKS**

ATLANTICO, which had considerable ammunition on board, did rejoin the other ships of the expedition at 1816, April 18th, at a point about 50 miles south of the beach and transferred her supplies to the waiting two LCI's and three LCU's for a night run to the beach.

6. By the time the supplies were transferred and the convoy had started north it was too late to hope to resupply the beach under cover of darkness. The convoy commander asked CIA Operational Headquarters, Washington, for destroyer escort and U.S. Navy Jet cover without which he believed that he would lose his ships to air attack the next morning. He added that without U.S. Navy support the Cuban crew would mutiny if sent back to the beach.

7. As a result of these messages, CIA Headquarters, feeling that it would be futile to order these ammunition craft to attempt a daylight unloading, called off the mission and the attempt to get ammunition to the beach by sea ended. The President was not requested for specific authority to extend the air cover to protect the ammunition convoy.

8. These causes for the ammunition shortage rested in turn on others which lay deeper in the plans and organization of this operation and the attitude toward it on the part of Government officials. The effectiveness of the Castro Air Force over the beach resulted from a failure to destroy the airplanes on the ground (particularly the T-33's whose importance was not fully appreciated in advance) before or concurrently with the landing. This failure was a consequence of the restraints put on the anti-Castro Air Force in planning and executing its strikes, primarily for the purpose of protecting the covert character of the operation. These restraints included: the decision to use only the B-26 as a combat aircraft because it had been distributed widely to foreign countries; the limitation of pre-landing strikes to those which could be flown from non-U.S. controlled airfields under the guise of coming from Cuban strips, thus eliminating the possibility of using jet fighters or even T-33 trainers; the inability to use any non-Cuban base within short turn-around distance from the target area (about nine hours were required to turn

around a B-26 for a second mission over the target from Nicaragua); prohibition of use of American contract pilots for tactical air operations; restriction on munitions, notably napalm; and the cancellation of the strikes planned at dawn on D-Day. The last mentioned was probably the most serious as it eliminated the last favorable opportunity to destroy the Castro Air Force on the ground. The cancellation seems to have resulted partly from the failure to make the air strike plan entirely clear in advance to the President and the Secretary of State, but, more importantly, by misgivings as to the effect of the air strikes on the position of the United States in the current UN debate on Cuba. Finally, there was the failure to carry the issue to the President when the opportunity was presented and explain to him with proper force the probable military consequences of a last-minute cancellation.

9. The flight of the CARIBE and ATLANTICO might have been prevented had more attention been paid in advance to the control of the ships to include the placing of some Americans aboard. The CIA officer responsible for all the ships involved was a [redacted] who was aboard the LCI BLAGAR with no means to control the freighters, or, indeed, to locate them after they disappeared. Only the initiative of the U.S. Navy in the vicinity brought them back to the scene of action. The absence of Americans on board these vessels was an application of the general order to keep Americans out of the combat area. This order had been violated in a few cases, but it was apparently not considered important to do so in the case of the freighters.

10. The lack of full appreciation of the ammunition situation at the end of D+1 in the CIA Operational Headquarters was largely the result of the difficulty of keeping abreast of the situation on the beach, and the location and movement of the ships at sea from the distance of Washington. Also, there was a confidence in the supply of the beach by air which turned out to be unjustified. Had there been a command ship in the sea area with an advance CIA command post on board, a more effective control would have been possible.

11. The Executive branch of the Government was not organizationally prepared to cope with this kind of paramilitary operation. There was no single authority short of the President capable of coordinating the actions of CIA, State, Defense, and USIA. Top level direction was given through ad hoc meetings of senior officials without consideration of operational plans in writing and with no arrangement for recording conclusions and decisions reached.

ATTACHMENT

13 June 1961

Memorandum No. 3

CONCLUSIONS OF THE CUBAN STUDY GROUP

1. It is concluded that:

a. A paramilitary operation of the magnitude of ZAPATA could not be prepared and conducted in such a way that all U.S. support of it and connection with it could be plausibly disclaimed. Accordingly, this operation did not fit within the limited scope of NSC 5412/2. By about November 1960, the impossibility of running ZAPATA as a covert operation under CIA should have been recognized and the situation reviewed. The subsequent decision might then have been made to limit the efforts to attain covertness to the degree and nature of U.S. participation, and to assign responsibility for the amphibious operation to the Department of Defense. In this case, the CIA would have assisted in concealing the participation of Defense. Failing such a reorientation, the project should have been abandoned.

b. Once the need for the operation was established, its success should have had the primary consideration of all agencies in the Government. Operational restrictions designed to protect its covert character should have been accepted only if they did not impair the chance of success. As it was, the leaders of the operation were obliged to fit their plan inside changing ground rules laid down for non-military considerations, which often had serious operational disadvantages.

c. The leaders of the operation did not always present their case with sufficient force and clarity to the senior officials of the Government to allow the latter to appreciate the consequences of some of their decisions. This remark applies in particular to the circumstances surrounding the cancellation of the D-Day strikes.

d. There was a marginal character to the operation which increased with each additional limitation and cast a serious doubt over its ultimate success. The landing force was small in relation to its 36-mile beachhead and to the probable enemy reaction. The air support was short of pilots if the beach was to require cover for a long period. There were no fighters to

keep off such Castro airplanes as might escape the initial air strikes. There were few Cuban replacements for the battle losses which were certain to occur on the ground and in the air. It is felt that the approval of so marginal an operation by many officials was influenced by the feeling that the Cuban Brigade was a waning asset which had to be used quickly as time was against us, and that this operation was the best way to realize the most from it. Also, the consequences of demobilizing the Brigade and the return of the trainees to the U.S.A., with its implication that the United States had lost interest in the fight against Castro, played a part in the final decision.

e. The Cuban Expeditionary Force achieved tactical surprise in its landing and, as we have said, fought well and inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy. Although there had been considerable evidence of strong pockets of resistance against Castro throughout Cuba, the short life of the beachhead was not sufficient to trigger an immediate popular reaction, and Castro's repressive measures following the landing made coordinated uprisings of the populace impossible. The effectiveness of the Castro military forces, as well as that of his police measures, was not entirely anticipated or foreseen.

f. In approving the operation, the President and senior officials had been greatly influenced by the understanding that the landing force could pass to guerrilla status, if unable to hold the beachhead. These officials were informed on many occasions that the ZAPATA area was guerrilla territory, and that the entire force, in an emergency, could operate as guerrillas. With this alternative to fall back on, the view was held that a sudden or disastrous defeat was most improbable. As we have indicated before, the guerrilla alternative as it had been described was not in fact available to this force in the situation which developed.

g. The operation suffered from being run from the distance of Washington. At that range and with the limited reporting which was inevitable on the part of field commanders absorbed in combat, it was not possible to have a clear understanding in Washington of events taking place in the field. This

was particularly the case on the night of D+1 when an appreciation of the ammunition situation would have resulted in an appeal for U.S. air cover and an all-out effort to supply the beach by all available means.

h. The Joint Chiefs of Staff had the important responsibility of examining into the military feasibility of this operation. By acquiescing in the ZAPATA Plan, they gave the impression to others of approving it although they had expressed their preference for TRINIDAD at the outset, a point which apparently never reached the senior civilian officials. As a body they reviewed the successive changes of the plan piecemeal and only within a limited context, a procedure which was inadequate for a proper examination of all the military ramifications. Individually, they had differing understandings of important features of the operation apparently arising from oral briefings in the absence of written documents.

i. Although the intelligence was not perfect, particularly as to the evaluation of the effectiveness of the T-33's, we do not feel that any failure of intelligence contributed significantly to the defeat.

j. The planning and conduct of the operation would have been improved if there had been an initial statement of governmental policy, assigning the mission and setting the guidelines within which it was to develop. Thereafter, there was a need for a formalized procedure for interdepartmental coordination and follow-up with adequate record-keeping of decisions.

2. In the light of the foregoing considerations, we are of the opinion that the preparations and execution of paramilitary operations such as ZAPATA are a form of Cold War action in which the country must be prepared to engage. If it does so, it must engage in it with a maximum chance of success. Such operations should be planned and executed by a governmental mechanism capable of bringing into play, in addition to military and covert techniques, all other forces, political, economic, ideological, and intelligence, which can contribute to its success. No such mechanism presently exists but should be created to plan, coordinate and further a national Cold War strategy capable of including paramilitary operations.

3  
13 June 1961

Memorandum No. 4

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CUBAN STUDY GROUP

Recommendation No. 1

A MECHANISM FOR THE PLANNING AND COORDINATION  
OF COLD WAR STRATEGY

1. The over-all problem in conducting Cold War operations is to be able to coordinate, foster and focus all available and necessary assets on the achievement of objectives approved by the President. These assets are found in many departments of the Government, but particularly in the Department of State, the Department of Defense and the CIA. To use them effectively requires planning and coordination across departmental lines without disturbing departmental responsibility for the execution of agreed tasks arising from the Cold War programs.
2. In the past, the requirements of Cold War actions have often been met by weekly meetings of the 5412 Committee or by ad hoc task forces organized to cope with a particular situation. This method is clumsy and lends itself to a proliferation of short-lived committees which come and go without building up experience in a permanent staff and accumulating a body of knowledge needed for improved future performance. The present proposal is to set up a permanent committee of representatives of under-secretarial rank from State, Defense and CIA under a full-time Chairman reporting directly to the President. This new organization (herein called tentatively the Strategic Resources Group and abbreviated SRG) would guide and coordinate Cold War strategy and maintain a Cold War Indications Center where useful Cold War data would be assembled and the world Cold War situation kept under constant review. (See inclosure A - Chart of SRG). The SRG would replace the 5412 Committee, would assume the review of important covert operations now being conducted or to be conducted under NSC 5412/2, and would undertake the development and recommendations of Cold War plans and programs for those countries or areas specifically assigned to it by the President for that purpose.

RECORDED  
OCT 1961

3. A Cold War plan or program would usually have its inception in the approval by the President of a concept submitted to him by the SRG. Thereafter, the SRG with the staff of the Cold War Indications Center would produce an outline plan containing an assignment of primary responsibility and supporting roles for further development of the concept. At this point, it may often be desirable to set up an interdepartmental task force to expand the plan and coordinate execution. The Chairman, SRG, or his representative, would be the chairman of such a task force and would keep records of all meetings. If the execution of the plan fell generally within the capability of a single agency no task force would be necessary. In either case, the outline plan would be expanded by this task force or by the agency of primary responsibility to include the assignment of specific departmental tasks.

4. Upon the elaboration of the supporting departmental plans to carry out these tasks, the SRG would assemble and review all parts of the plan, submitting it or a summary thereof to the President for approval and for authorization to implement. At this point, as well as at earlier stages, it is anticipated that the President would consult the NSC or members of it.

5. The foregoing procedure shows in outline the possible treatment of a completely new project. In practice, the procedure would be compressed and short-circuited when preliminary work had been done prior to consideration of a project by the SRG. The full procedure is shown in the following tabulation.

PROCEDURE FOR PLANNING AND COORDINATING  
INTERDEPARTMENTAL COLD WAR OPERATIONS

	<u>Developed By</u>	<u>Approved By</u>	<u>Executed By</u>
Concept of a Cold War Operation	SRG or other governmental agency	SRG President	
Outline Plan including assignment of primary responsibility and basic tasks	SRG or other designated agency	President	
Development of Departmental Tasks	Task Force or department of primary responsibility	SRG	
Departmental Plans	Departments & agencies involved	SRG President	Departments & agencies involved, often under direction of an inter-departmental Task Force of which the Chairman, SRG or his representative would be a member
Evaluation of progress and final results		SRG	Data provided by departments & agencies involved

6. a. The Cold War Indications Center (CWIC), under the Strategic Resources Group, could if fully developed eventually serve as the governmental command post for the Cold War, organized and staffed to operate around the clock. Initially, it would perform the following functions for the countries and areas assigned to the SRG:

(1) Constant study of the situation to determine progress toward the approved goals of U.S. foreign policy.

(2) Maintenance of basic data for each country showing assets and liabilities affecting U.S. policy.

(3) The timely determination of "criticality," that is, where and when there is a danger of defeat or opportunity for victory in a given country or area. When a country is determined to be "critical," it would normally be assigned by the President to the planning and coordination jurisdiction of the Strategic Resources Group.

(4) Determination of requirements to fill the gap between assets and liabilities, and recommendations to correct the imbalance.

(5) Recommendation of tasks which should be assigned to the Executive departments and agencies.

(6) Follow-up on decisions and actions taken and recording of results achieved.

b. The Staff of the CWIC would consist of a director assisted by a technical advisor for the display of data within the Center... He would have two principal assistants; (1) the Chief, Foreign Information, charged with the assembly and display of basic data; (2) the Chief of Plans and Review, charged with the evaluation of criticality, the determination of requirements, the recommendation of tasks and the review of results. The Center would be supported by a small working staff including specialists from State, Defense, JCS, CIA and USIA on loan or detail from their departments and agencies of origin.

7. It should be clear that the SRG would not operate and would issue no orders in its own name. At the Washington level, it would collect data, keep the Cold War situation under review and anticipate future requirements. It

would not get into interdepartmental activities except when specifically directed by the President and then only for over-all planning, coordination and review. Responsibility for coordination overseas would remain as at present, although it may become desirable to have miniature Cold War Indications Centers in some embassies.

8. It is recommended that appropriate action be taken at once to set up a Strategic Resources Group and a Cold War Indications Center in accordance with the foregoing concept.

Recommendation No. 2

RESPONSIBILITY FOR PARAMILITARY OPERATIONS

1. For the purpose of this study, a paramilitary operation is considered to be one which by its tactics and its requirements in military-type personnel, equipment and training approximates a conventional military operation. It may be undertaken in support of an existing government friendly to the U.S. or in support of a rebel group seeking to overthrow a government hostile to us. The U.S. may render assistance to such operations overtly, covertly or by a combination of both methods. In size these operations may vary from the infiltration of a squad of guerrillas to a military operation such as the Cuban invasion. The small operations will often fall completely within the normal capability of one agency; the large ones may affect State, Defense, CIA, USIA and possibly other departments and agencies.

2. In order to conduct paramilitary operations with maximum effectiveness and flexibility within the context of the Cold War, it is recommended that current directives and procedures be modified to effect the following:

a. Any proposed paramilitary operation in the concept stage will be presented to the Strategic Resources Group for initial consideration and for approval as necessary by the President. Thereafter, the SRG will assign primary responsibility for planning, for interdepartment coordination and for execution to the Task Force, department or individual best qualified to carry forward the operation to success, and will indicate supporting responsibilities. Under this principle, the Department of Defense will

normally receive responsibility for overt paramilitary operations. Where such an operation is to be wholly covert or disavowable, it may be assigned to CIA, provided that it is within the normal capabilities of the agency. Any large paramilitary operation wholly or partly covert which requires significant numbers of militarily trained personnel, amounts of military equipment which exceed normal CIA-controlled stocks and/or military experience of a kind and level peculiar to the Armed Services is properly the primary responsibility of the Department of Defense with the CIA in a supporting role.

Recommendation No. 3

IMPROVEMENT OF EFFECTIVENESS IN THE PARAMILITARY FIELD

1. It is considered that the adoption of Recommendation 1, the creation of the Strategic Resources Group, will provide the organizational mechanism for improving interdepartmental effectiveness in the paramilitary field. Assuming the existence of such a Group, we consider that the problem then is to inventory paramilitary assets, determine probable paramilitary requirements and then make provision for any deficit between assets and requirements. Under the terms of Recommendation 2, the Department of Defense is regarded as usually having the primary interest in planning and executing paramilitary operations, whereas State will be the principal beneficiary (since paramilitary operations are undertaken to achieve political ends) and CIA an expert collaborator in maintaining the covert character of such operations as required.
2. It is recommended that the President direct the Department of Defense, working with State and CIA, to inventory the paramilitary assets available to the U.S., overt and covert, U.S. and foreign, at home and abroad. After discussion with State and CIA, Defense will thereafter provide an estimate of paramilitary requirements and will recommend ways and means to meet any deficit existing between assets and requirements. Defense will transmit the results of these actions with recommendations to the President with information to the Strategic Resources Group.

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Recommendation No. 4\*

RELATIONS OF THE JCS TO THE PRESIDENT IN COLD WAR OPERATIONS

1. In the face of the threat of the Cold War, we feel that the JCS should be brought to feel as great a sense of responsibility for contributing to the success of the Cold War as to the conventional military defense of the country in time of war. They should be encouraged to express the military viewpoint clearly and directly before the President and other high officials of the Government. The latter, in turn, should be aware of the need of getting the considered views of the Chiefs before taking important decisions affecting Cold War programs and operations.

2. It is recommended that the President inform the Joint Chiefs of Staff essentially as follows:

a. The President regards the Joint Chiefs of Staff as his principal military advisor responsible both for initiating advice to him and for responding to requests for advice. He expects their advice to come to him direct and unfiltered.

b. The Joint Chiefs of Staff have a similar responsibility for the defense of the nation in the Cold War as in conventional hostilities. They should know the military and paramilitary forces and resources available to the Department of Defense, verify their readiness, report on their adequacy, and make appropriate recommendations for their expansion and improvement. The President looks to the Chiefs to contribute dynamic and imaginative leadership in contributing to the success of the military and paramilitary aspects of Cold War programs.

c. The President expects the Joint Chiefs of Staff to present the military viewpoint in governmental councils in such a way as to assure that the military factors are clearly understood before decisions are reached. When only the Chairman or a single Chief is present, that officer must represent the Chiefs as a body, taking such preliminary and subsequent actions as may be necessary to assure that he does in fact represent the corporate judgment of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

\* Mr. Dulles only participated in the preparation of the paragraphs of this recommendation which relate to the relationship of the JCS to Cold War activities.

3

d. While the President looks to the Chiefs to present the military factor without reserve or hesitation, he regards them to be more than military men and expects their help in fitting military requirements into the over-all context of any situation, recognizing that the most difficult problem in Government is to combine all assets in a unified, effective pattern.

Recommendation No. 5

1. It is our feeling that every effort should be made to draw all lessons from the Cuban operation, particularly those which point up the errors made and the reasons therefor. For this purpose all the principal participants in the decision-making process should be informed of what took place so that the operation can be viewed objectively in its totality. Because of the tight security which surrounded the operation in governmental circles, probably no one official now knows all the important facts concerning it. We believe that the Cuban Study Group should give an oral presentation to the participants of the highlights of their study.

2. We also feel that the occasion offers the President the opportunity to express to his principal assistants and advisors his sense of the need of a changed attitude on the part of the government and of the people toward the emergency which confronts us. The first requirement of such a change is to recognize that we are in a life and death struggle which we may be losing, and will lose unless we change our ways and marshall our resources with an intensity associated in the past only with times of war.\* To effect this change, we must give immediate consideration to taking such measures as the announcement of a limited national emergency, the review of any treaties or international agreements which restrain the full use of our resources in the Cold War, and the determination to seek the respect of our neighbors, without the criterion being international popularity, and a policy of taking into account the proportioning of foreign aid to the attitude shown us by our neighbors. In the light of the strained situation in Laos and the potential crisis building up over Berlin, we

\* Mr. Dulles agrees with the estimate given in this paragraph 2 as to the gravity of the situation facing the country and with the various recommendations in Memorandum No. 4 relating to improving our operations under NSC 5412/2. He did not participate in the recommendations in this paragraph 2 following the asterisk.

3

should consider at once affirmative programs to cope with the threat in both areas. There should be a reexamination of emergency powers of the President as to their adequacy to meet the developing situation.

3. The President might link these remarks to our Recommendation No. 1 which is the need to set up a governmental machinery for better use of our Cold War assets, and conclude on the note that any Cold War operation, once started, must be carried through to conclusion with the same determination as a military operation.

4. It is recommended that a critique of the Cuban operation, accompanied by a statement of the views of the President, be held with at least the following present: the Vice President, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the Attorney General, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Director of Central Intelligence, the Special Assistant for National Security Affairs and General Taylor.

#### Recommendation No. 6

In the course of its work, this Group has been exposed to the views on Cuba of many U.S. officials and of individuals, Cuban and U.S., who have been close to the Cuban problem. We have been struck with the general feeling that there can be no long-term living with Castro as a neighbor. His continued presence within the hemispheric community as a dangerously effective exponent of Communism and Anti-Americanism constitutes a real menace capable of eventually overthrowing the elected governments in any one or more of weak Latin American republics. There are only two ways to view this threat; either to hope that time and internal discontent will eventually end it, or to take active measures to force its removal. Unless by "time" we are thinking in terms of years, there is little reason to place reliance on the first course of action as being effective in Castro's police state. The second has been made more difficult by the April failure and is now possible only through overt U.S. participation with as much Latin American support as can be raised. Neither alternative is attractive, but no decision is, in effect, a choice of the first..

While inclining personally to a positive course of action against Castro without delay, we recognize the danger of dealing with the Cuban problem outside the context of the world Cold War situation. Action against Castro must be related to the probable course of events in such other places as Southeast Asia and Berlin which may put simultaneous claims on our resources.

It is recommended that the Cuban situation be reappraised in the light of all presently known factors and new guidance be provided for political, military, economic and propaganda action against Castro.

Inclosure "A"

THE STRATEGIC RESOURCES GROUP

APPROVES IN CONSULTATION WITH NSC:

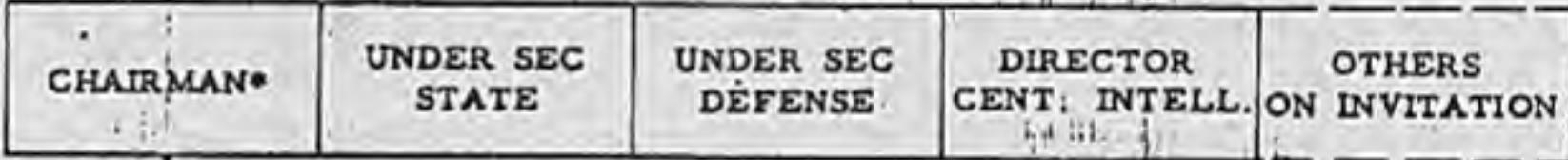
- a. Cold war policy
- b. Specific concepts & plans

PRESIDENT

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

\*\*STRATEGIC RESOURCES GROUP

- a. Develops concepts & outline plans
- b. Monitors approved operation plans
- c. Obtains Presidential decisions
- d. Replaces 5412 Committee



CWIC FOR AREAS ASSIGNED SRG

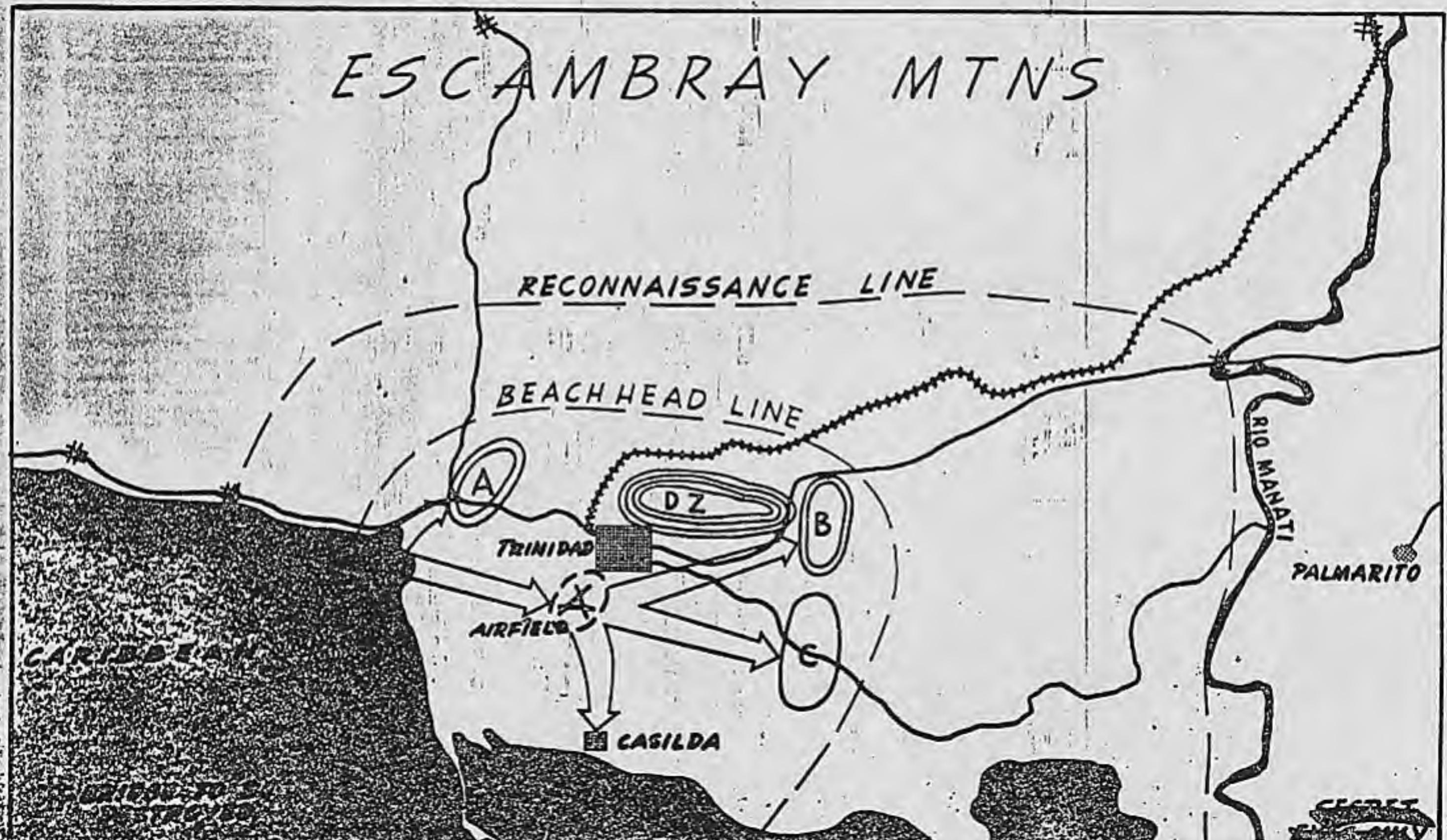
- a. Keeps cold war areas under survey.
- b. Maintains basic data on cold war assets and liabilities.
- c. Evaluates criticality.
- d. Recommends tasks.
- e. Reviews and reports results.

- \*\* SRG issues no orders in its own name. It undertakes planning and coordination of inter-departmental activities only when specifically directed by the President.

- \* Presidential designee giving full time to SRG  
Advisory Member NSC

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# TRINIDAD PLAN



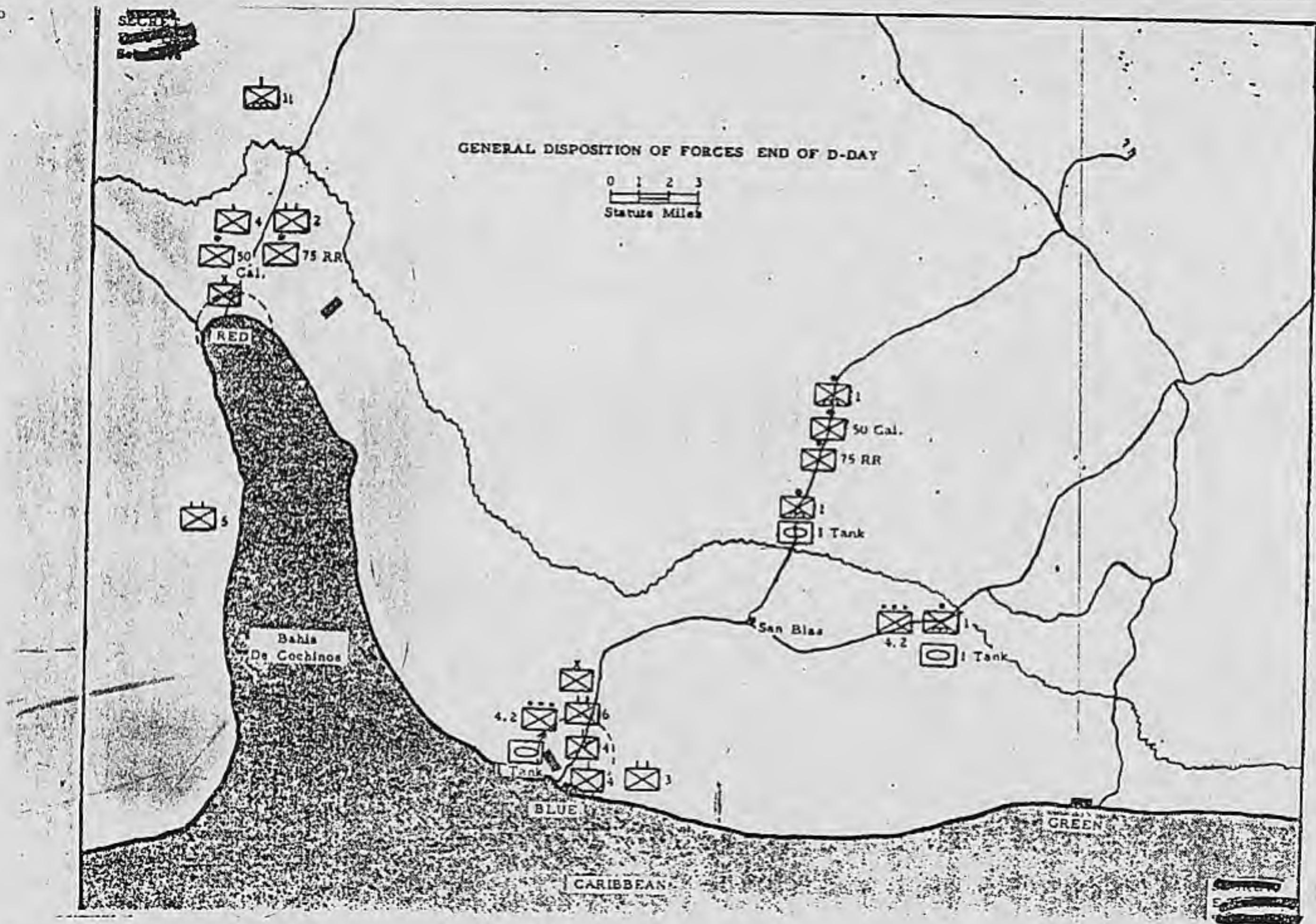


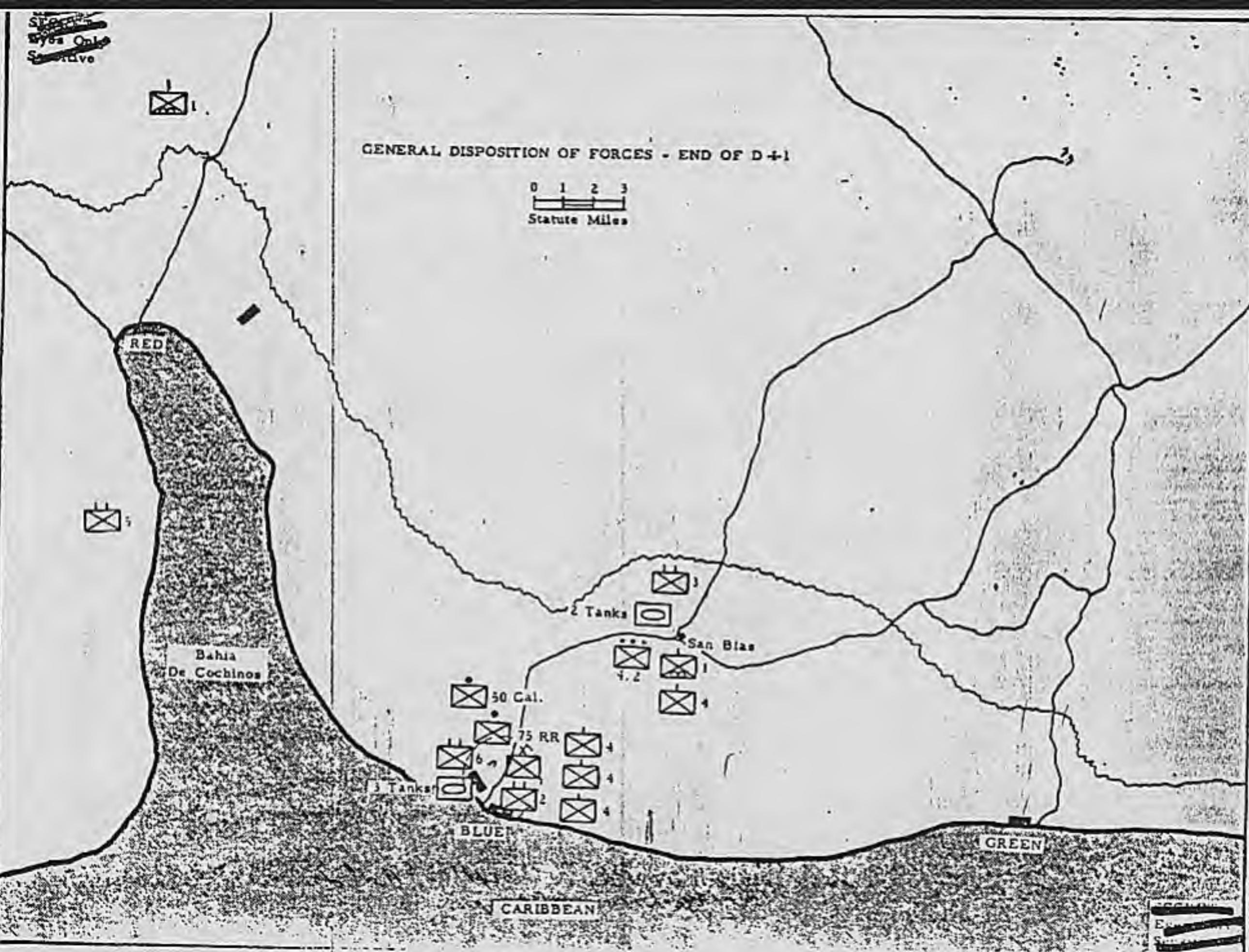


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GENERAL DISPOSITION OF FORCES END OF D-DAY

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**MEMORANDUMS**  
**for Record of**  
**Paramilitary Study Group**  
**Meetings**

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Nat'l. Archive Review Committee, 6/21/78  
By JK NARS Date 8/23/78

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E.O. 11652, Sec. 11  
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By JK NARS, Date 6/23/71

6/24/71

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[REDACTED]

CONVERSATION WITH MR. PHILLIPS

MR. PHILLIPS

[REDACTED]

CONVERSATION WITH [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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Nat'l Archives Review Committee 6/21/78  
By JK NARS Date 6/23/78

First Meeting

GENERAL MAXWELL D. TAYLOR

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**TOP SECRET**

23 April 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT : First Meeting of General Maxwell Taylor's Board  
of Inquiry on Cuban Operations Conducted by CIA

TIME AND PLACE : 1400-1800 hours, 22 April 1961, Quarters Eye

PARTICIPANTS : Investigating Committee Members

General Maxwell D. Taylor  
Attorney General Robert Kennedy  
Admiral Arleigh Burke  
Allen W. Dulles

Department of Defense

Major General David W. Gray  
Colonel C. W. Shuler  
Commander Mitchell

CIA Personnel

General C. P. Cabell  
C. Tracy Barnes  
Colonel J. C. King  
Jacob D. Esterline  
-----  
Colonel Jack Hawkins

1. After a discussion of procedural matters, it was decided that all papers and documents stemming from the inquiry would be retained by General Maxwell Taylor. Colonel J. C. King, Chief, Western Hemisphere Division, was designated recorder of the first meeting.

**SANITIZED**  
PUBLISHED IN FRUS 1961-63  
VOL X DOC # 150m  
By JMK NARA Date 4/19/96

**TOP SECRET**

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2. Mr. Dulles, in his opening remarks, cited the document which authorized CIA to conduct paramilitary operations. This document, NSC 5412, was described as one of the most secret documents in the U. S. Government. Mr. Dulles said that under this authority CIA is directed to engage in activities such as the Cuban operation under the general supervision of the National Security Council. General Taylor indicated that he wanted a copy of this document to be made available to him for his study. General Gray indicated he had a copy and would give it to General Taylor.

3. Colonel King was then asked to describe Agency activities on the Cuban problem prior to the establishment of the Task Force, i.e., Branch 4 of the Western Hemisphere Division on 18 January 1960. In his remarks Colonel King stated that in late 1958 CIA made two attempts (each approved by the Department of State) to block Castro's ascension to power. The first attempt was made in November 1958 when contact was established with Justo Carrillo and the Montecristi Group. The second attempt was made on or about the 9th of December 1958 when former Ambassador William D. Pawley, supported by the CIA Chief of Station in Havana, ..... and Colonel King, approached Batista and proposed the establishment of a Junta to whom Batista would turn over the reins of government. Colonel King was queried by the Attorney General as to the approximate date that the Agency concluded that Castro was unacceptable to the U. S. politically, if not actually a Communist, and when this conclusion reached the Secretary of State and the President. Colonel King commented that there were reports as early as June or July 1958 during the period that sailors from Guantanamo were held by Castro forces which indicated beyond a reasonable doubt that the U. S. was up against an individual who could not be expected to be acceptable to U. S. Government interests. Admiral Burke also made reference to the fact that he had been in at least one meeting with Colonel King on or about 29 December 1958 in which officials of the Department of State, except for Under Secretary Robert Murphy, appeared to feel that Castro was politically compatible to U. S. objectives. Considerable discussion involving all members of the Investigating Committee followed on this point with the Attorney General requesting assurance that Agency reports at that time reached the highest authority.

4. Reference was made to the first few days of January 1959 in Havana when a primary target of the advance guard was the Communist files in BRAC.

5. reported that on 21 September 1959 he assumed the responsibility for planning for potential Agency action in contingency situations that might evolve in Latin America. He stated that this was a staff position that conducted liaison with existing desks in an attempt to identify the existence or non-existence of basic information which was an essential preliminary to the planning of clandestine operations within any given country. Most of the countries of Central America (Guatemala, Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador) were identified as potential contingency problems because of the instability of their governments. The Isle of Hispanola -- Haiti and the Dominican Republic -- was a high priority target. In South America, Paraguay, Bolivia and Argentina were included among the countries which required review and potential action. Cuba, quite naturally, emerged as the number one target for contingency planning. Because of the national policy affecting Latin America, it was ascertained early in the survey that the operating desks did not have available in collated fashion the type of information that was required for planning purposes for covert operations. As a result of this discovery, the entire intelligence community was given a requirement to produce certain information on the various countries involved with special emphasis on Cuba as rapidly as possible. In time, a three-volume study was produced which included basic intelligence, political and psychological information, operational data, geographical information, selected potential areas for clandestine operations, and related operational data.

6. The Cuban situation continued to deteriorate rapidly and in December 1959, it was decided that CIA needed to consider urgently the activation of two programs:

A. The selection, recruitment and careful evaluation (including medical, psychological, psychiatric and polygraph) of approximately thirty-five (35) Cubans, preferably with previous military experience, for an intensive training program which would qualify them to become instructors in various paramilitary skills, including leadership, sabotage, communications, etc.

B. The instructor cadre would in turn, in some third country in Latin America, conduct clandestinely a training of additional Cuban recruits who would be organized into small teams similar to the U. S. Army Special Forces concept, and infiltrated with

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communicators, into areas of Cuba where it had been determined numbers of dissidents existed who required specialized skills and leadership and military supplies.

At this time, the basic Agency concept of operations was that the members of the instructor cadre would never be committed to Cuban soil. The members of the paramilitary leadership groups would be introduced covertly into the target area.

7. As a result of this fundamental decision, ..... went ..... in mid-December 1959 to survey certain isolated areas ..... to determine the potential usefulness of these areas for the training of the instructor cadre. In addition to the survey, ..... and ..... held meetings with CINCCARIB Lt. Gen. Ridgely Gaither, and CGUSARCARIB Major Gen. Charles Dasher, to familiarize them with the basic Agency thinking in the Cuban matter.

8. Mr. Esterline outlined the organization of the Task Force and the steps which led to the paper presented to the President on 14 March 1960 and approved 17 March 1960, which was the first authorization to mount an operation to get rid of Castro. General Taylor requested the original T/O of that Task Force. He also requested other T/O's, including the present one, which will illustrate the buildup of the Force.

9. Mr. Bissell discussed the 17th of March approval. The concept then presented persisted for approximately 10 months. There were four major courses:

A. Creation of a political opposition. This took 4 to 5 months and during that period it was found less and less possible to rely on the Cuban politicians.

B. Mass communications to the Cuban people.

C. Covert intelligence and action originating inside Cuba.

D. The building of an adequate paramilitary force outside Cuba which called for cadres of leaders.

10. The original budget did not provide for the mounting of an organization of the type which eventually developed.

11. General Taylor then requested that the exact procedure

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followed in the clearance in this basic paper of 17 March 1960 be described.

12. Through 1958, 1959, 1960 and so far in 1961, weekly meetings have been held with the Assistant Secretary of State, his deputy, Special Assistant, and a representative from the Office of Special Operations in State, for the purpose of briefing them on the highlights of intelligence. Since the approval of the paper, they have also been kept informed in general terms of major operational aspects.

13. Mr. Bissell said that the language of the basic paper was general as we did not know then how large a force would be built up. During the autumn months of 1960, the military force took shape and the original concept went through subtle changes.

14. In June 1960, the FRD (Frente Revolucionario Democratico) came into being. This was one of the first orders of business. It was needed as an umbrella for the recruiting and training of a nucleus of a military force. The thinking then was that this military group would be used in small teams and serve as a catalyst for uprisings in Cuba.

15. The Attorney General then asked was it conceived that Castro could be overthrown with a catalyst force at that time. Mr. Bissell replied that the original concept was to generate various pressures on Castro including this force, and it was expected that the classic guerrilla pattern would be followed. The Attorney General then asked what step should we have taken at that time if we had known what we know now, and did we have any policy then. Mr. Dulles replied we did have a policy, which was to overthrow Castro in one way or another.

16. General Taylor asked if the plan was based on capabilities or on what we actually needed, to which Mr. Dulles replied in the negative. Mr. Bissell said we thought we could build up guerrilla resistance through teams being infiltrated to groups inside, which would lead to the formation of a large enough group to facilitate air drops of arms and other materiel.

17. Mr. Esterline said we had a navy of sorts which ran operations for the ex/infiltration of personnel and the introduction of arms and other materiel with better than 50% success. The buildup of guerrillas did not

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occur as expected and the number of successful drops was very low. This led to the further expansion of our military force to the point that it had gotten beyond the covert state about 1 November 1960.

18. General Taylor requested the date that military training began. He was informed that thirty (30) selected leaders were sent to a jungle area ..... in July 1960. These were all recruited and carefully screened by the FRD.

19. General Taylor asked if maximum effort was made to raise manpower. Mr. Esterline answered that at first we were very selective and the troops came in at a trickle. Later they came in at a greater rate than we could handle. Mr. Esterline described the method of selection and screening. General Taylor asked if figures were available as to how many ex-officers of the Cuban army were recruited and as complete a breakdown as possible of personnel.

20. Mr. Barnes stated that beginning about mid-November 1960, there were weekly discussions in the Special Group. Mr. Dulles said recommendations from the Task Force were considered at these meetings. Special Group references show that on 16 November 1960, the changing concept of the operation was noted by Under Secretary Livingston Merchant. By November 1960, it was recognized that guerrilla warfare operations in the Escambray were not going well; we were having difficulty with air drops and some change in approach was needed.

21. Mr. Bissell said that one of the problems at this time was the Department of State's concern about tainting Guatemala and Nicaragua if the size was augmented. The Agency was asked to consider withdrawing from Guatemala and setting up an American base. After further consideration, the use of a base in the continental U. S. was ruled out.

22. In answer to General Taylor's question as to what bottle-necks existed, it was stated that there were no bases immediately available for the training of large numbers of the troops and that recruits came in at a trickle until the political base was broadened.

23. The Attorney General asked what was the purpose of a Strike Force, to which Mr. Bissell replied they would administer a strike

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which could lead to a general uprising or a formation of larger guerrilla units in the mountains with which dissidents could join forces. The Strike Force was not in repudiation of the guerrilla concept but in addition to it.

24. Col. Hawkins stated there never was a clear-cut decision in his mind policy-wise to use a Strike Force.

25. Mr. Bissell read excerpts from a memorandum of 8 December 1960 of a meeting of the Special Group where a changing concept had been presented by various members of the Task Force. General Taylor said that all members of the board want a copy of this paper.

26. Among the items requested in this memorandum, officers from the Special Forces for the training of the Strike Force were authorized, the use of an air strip at Puerto Cabezas, Nicaragua was approved, supply missions were approved, and on Tuesday, 19 April, the use of American contract pilots was approved. Records are in General Lansdale's office.

27. General Taylor asked what discussions there were with President Eisenhower during this period and requested copies of any existing memoranda.

28. Mr. Dulles said that the only minutes of the meetings of the 5412 Group were prepared and kept by CIA. These could be consulted by authorized individuals of other departments.

29. Mr. Bissell quoted from the minutes of a 5412 meeting where doubt was expressed that a covert force could succeed and consequently overt action might be required. About 1 January 1961, recruiting was greatly stepped up.

30. In reply to General Taylor's question as to when did we reach concept number three, Mr. Esterline said about 1 March 1961. In January and February 1961, JCS teams were sent to the camps under special arrangement and furnished the necessary instructor force for training of a larger strike force.

31. The Board agreed that one set of papers only would be kept, these to be by General Taylor. Documents desired are:

- A. The 5412 Paper. General Gray has a copy in his possession.
- B. Basic paper of 17 March 1960.
- C. Tables of Organization beginning with the creation of the Task Force.
- D. Both communications plans.
- E. Chronology of events from 17 March 1960:
  - (1) CIA chronology.
  - (2) State chronology.
- F. Changes in concept.
- G. Data on both American and Cuban personnel.
- H. Supply plan.
- I. Training plan.
- J. Intelligence aspects.
- K. Reconstitution of facts and intelligence available when plans were approved.

32. It was agreed that the next meeting would be held at 1000 hours on Monday, 24 April 1961, in the Director's conference room.

[REDACTED]

**Distribution:**

Original - Copy #1 - General Maxwell D. Taylor  
Copy #2 - Admiral Arleigh Burke  
Copy #3 - Allen W. Dulles  
Copy #4 - Attorney General Robert Kennedy  
Copy #5 - Major General D. W. Gray  
Copy #6 - Richard M. Bissell, Jr.  
Copy #7 - [REDACTED]  
Copy #8 - [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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E.O. 11652, Sec. 11  
Natl. Archives Review Committee 6/21/73  
By JK NARS, Date 6/23/73

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MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

OF THE

TAYLOR COMMITTEE

AT THE

CONFERENCE ROOM (ROOM 214)

DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

AT 1350 HOURS

24 APRIL 1961

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 11652, Sec. II

Natl. Archives Review Committee, 6/21/78  
By JK NARS Date 6/22/78

PRESENT

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

MR. ALLEN DULLES

GENERAL C. B. CABELL

MR. RICHARD M. BISSELL

[REDACTED]

MR. TRACY BARNES

[REDACTED]

*W. K. 2/22/61*

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Signed [redacted]

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E.O. 11652, Sec. 11  
H.A.R. Archive Review Committee 6/24/71  
By JK NARS Date 6/23/71

# SANITIZED COPY

GENERAL MAXWELL D. TAYLOR

SUBJ: Second Meeting of the Green Study Group  
(24 April 1961)

NOTE: The note at the top of page 15 before para. 48 refers to a 45-minute period when the CIA secretary was not present at the meeting. Although a duplication for the most part, in order to assure coverage of this 45-minute period, a copy of the Memo for Record of the afternoon meeting at CIA starting at 1350 on 24 April 1961, prepared by the Study Group Assistant from General Taylor's office, has been appended to the original report.

24 April 1961

**MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD**

SUBJECT : SECOND MEETING OF THE GREEN STUDY GROUP

**TIME AND PLACE:** 1020-1700 hours, 24 April 1961, CIA Administration Building

**PARTICIPANTS : Study Group Members**

General Maxwell D. Taylor  
Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy  
Admiral Arleigh Burke  
Director of Central Intelligence, Mr. Allen W. Dulles

**Department of Defense**

General David W. Gray  
Commander Mitchell

**Colonel Inglelido**

Central Intelligence Agency

General C. P. Cabell

Mr. Richard M. Bissell, Jr.

Mr. C. Tracy Barnes

1. Minutes of the first meeting held on Saturday, 22 April 1961, as prepared by [REDACTED], were passed to all members of the committee and read by them prior to the opening of today's session.

2. General Taylor suggested that since the President did not consider this study of the Cuban Project to be either an "inquiry" or an "investigation", that some other title for the group be agreed upon. ██████████'s suggestion that it be called the "Green Study Group" was agreed to and General Taylor

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suggested that the first page of the 22 April minutes be amended to reflect this change of title in the heading of those minutes.

3. Gen. Taylor referred to the top of Page Five of the minutes of the first meeting in which a "Special Group" is mentioned and asked the identity of this special group. Mr. Barnes said that this was a special group that got into the activity at the change of phase (?) and that it was not the 5412 Special Group. Mr. Bissell promised to deliver to Gen. Taylor by the end of the day, copies of all memoranda prepared by the Special Group on Cuba.

4. Gen. Taylor said that he had asked the JCS to provide a recording secretary to keep a record of the proceedings of the committee and that Col. Inglelido would make his appearance during the course of the morning meeting. It was agreed [REDACTED] would keep a record of the morning session and that Col. Inglelido would thereafter take over.

5. The question of whether the meeting should be recorded was brought up and it was decided not to record the meeting unless a particular speaker wished to have his remarks taped.

6. Mr. Kennedy asked that notes on the meeting be provided all members. Otherwise, only one copy of the actual record of the proceedings, and documents presented in connection therewith, would be kept.

7. Mr. Bissell then commenced the discussion by resuming the chronological account of the development of the Project. He said on Saturday, 22 April, a review had been made of November and December, 1960, developments. By early January, the original concept of a 300-man force broken up into small teams for infiltration - after possible training in the United States - became shifted to the concept of a much stronger strike force. To Gen. Taylor's query as to whether this shift was covered by a formal paper, Mr. Bissell replied that there was no formal recording of the shift. The expansion of the forces in Guatemala was accelerated and on 12 January 1961, we received [REDACTED]. Following the arrival of these officers at the camp, the character of the training changed.

8. At the end of January, 28 January to be precise, the President was briefed on our Agency plan. At this time, little more was involved than a presentation, largely oral, of the status and a decision was obtained to continue with the activities but there was no implication that military action would be undertaken. Gen. Taylor asked if this was the first time the plan had been presented to the President and Mr. Bissell said yes, but added that the President did not offer an opinion concerning it. Mr. Bissell said we were seeking authority to continue all our activities--overflights, etc. and to call attention to the fact that we were recruiting and moving men and accumulating material and expending money against mere contingencies, and that we were anxious to present our plan to Gen. Lemnitzer.

(Gen. Gray was asked to provide a copy of this plan from his file. He remarked that this was the plan which the JCS had approved on 3 February 1961).

9. Mr. Bissell stated that on or about 17 February 1961, another meeting, including the President, was held. By this time the JCS had evaluated the military plan which had been developed by [REDACTED]. Gen. Taylor asked if this plan was considerably different from the final plan adopted and was answered affirmatively. At this February meeting, we felt a sense of urgency as the military plan called for a D-Day of 5 March. At the 17 February meeting, it became clear that there would be no immediate decision and that the plan would have to "slip" by one month. It was recalled that the President, the Secretary of State, Mr. Dulles, Mr. Bissell, Mr. Barnes, Gen. Gray, [REDACTED], Mr. Mann and Mr. Berle and possibly others, were present. Gen. Taylor asked if the outcome of that meeting was to decide to let D-Day slip and Mr. Bissell answered affirmatively adding that certain questions had been raised with respect to military implications.

10. Mr. Bissell then read from a paper he had prepared on 11 March which was a statement of the status of preparations, actions, timing and possible alternate courses of actions. This was presented at a meeting attended by much the same persons who attended the 17 February meeting. At this juncture, Mr. Dulles called to the attention of the committee a copy of Mr. Bundy's record of action of the 28 January meeting (of the NSC?). He stated he had no authority to disseminate copies but he would read it, which he did. The paper reported that the Director of Central Intelligence had reported on the situation in Cuba, that Cuba was rapidly becoming a communist state and that the United States had undertaken a program of covert action, propaganda, sabotage and assistance to exiles. The paper reported that the present estimate of the Department of Defense was that no program existed at this time which had capability of correcting the situation. The President, according to the document, authorized the continued activities of the Agency, including overflights. The Department of State was instructed to propose actions which could be taken in concert with other countries of the hemisphere, such as Brazil and Colombia. Mr. Dulles read the paper in full and stated it was available at any time to members of the committee.

11. Mr. Bissell read from a memorandum of the 11 March meeting concerning the status of immediate alternative courses of action:

- A. Use of force in such a way as to minimize appearance of an invasion, including amphibious infiltrations by night.
- B. Commit the FM force to a surprise attack, accompanied by use of tactical air force.
- C. Employ two successive landings - one a diversionary force to be followed by landing of the main force 24 hours later.

- D. Send the force into an inaccessible area where it could hold the beachhead for considerable time.

"A" and "D" were included because at the 17 February meeting, the President and the Secretary had urged an examination of all possible alternatives. No affirmative decision came out of the 11 March meeting.

12. Mr. Dulles then proceeded to read the statement of action of the meeting of 8 February. (A discussion of the two February dates ensued--8 February and 17 February--with Mr. Bissell conceding that there was no meeting on 17 February, but that the paper had been prepared for a meeting which had been cancelled or postponed.) Mr. Dulles stated that the President was not present at the 8 February meeting but the discussion resulted in a decision by the President to authorize the encouragement of the establishment of an exile Junta and Revolutionary Council and discussion with exile leaders looking toward such a development. No other action pending further word from the President, was authorized.

13. Mr. Dulles then read from a paper covering the 11 March meeting, noting the President had decided on the following courses of action:

- (1) Every effort should be made to assist the Cubans to form a political organization. This is to include publicity for the leading political figures.
- (2) The United States Government should prepare a "White Paper" on Cuba and assist the Cubans to do the same.
- (3) The Department of State would explore possibilities of a de marche in the United Nations (?).
- (4) President expects to offer United States' support for Cubans to return to their homeland. However, best plan for achieving this has not yet been presented. New proposals for action should be submitted.

✓ Gen. Taylor commented that it would appear the President was favorable to the concept but was not satisfied with the proposals to date.

14. Mr. Bissell then read an account of a 15 March meeting. According to this paper the plan for the Cuban operation submitted on 7 March 1961 was unacceptable as it was not a program of infiltration but a World War II type of assault. That in order for a plan to be politically acceptable it must:

- A. Be an unspectacular landing at night in an area where there was a minimum likelihood of opposition.
- B. If ultimate success would require tactical air support, it should appear to come from a Cuban air base. Therefore, territory seized should contain a suitable airfield.

The paper contained a brief outline of a second military plan prepared by [redacted] which was approximately the plan later adopted.

15. Mr. Bissell next read from notes on a meeting held on 16 March, at which time two operations were proposed:

- A. Trinidad - Probably an opposed landing in daylight with air support required.
- B. Zapata - Unopposed landing with no tactical air until opposed.

Consequently, as of 16 March, there were two plans still under consideration as indicated above. Between the 16th of March and the end of March another postponement was called due to the visit of Prime Minister MacMillian. The target date for action was postponed to 10 April, later to 15 April and finally to 17 April.

16. Mr. Bissell then read from a paper covering a meeting held on 12 April. By this time, the plan had crystallized and this covered the concept of the operation:

1. Modification of air plans to prove for air operations limited basis on D-2, and again on D-Day. Shortly after the first strike on D-2, Cuban pilots would land at Miami. Other details not discussed.
2. Diversion or cancellation. Not feasible to halt embarkation but if necessary, ships could be diverted.

Gen. Taylor asked why it was not feasible to halt the embarkation and Mr. Bissell replied that the staging and loading of the troops was already underway. Mr. Bissell said that approval was given on continuing stages but that on April 12, D minus 5, the President still had the power to stop it. Staging started D minus 7 and 2/3s had already been moved from camps and first vessel sailed on D minus 6 and the last on D minus 4. Mr. Kennedy commented that the plan appears to have been approved but the "GO" signal not given. He asked with whom the plan had been coordinated. Mr. Dulles stated that an Internal Departmental Task Force had been set up early in March 1961 and various tasks were assigned to the separate departments. The IDTF was composed of representatives from State, Defense and CIA, specifically, Mr. Braddock, former Charge at Habana representing State, Gen. Gray representing Defense, and Mr. Barnes, representing CIA. At the end of the 16 March meeting agreement was reached to set up the IDTF. Mr. Bissell said it was the sense of the 16 March meeting that the Zapata plan was preferable. Admiral Burke commented that the JCS did not agree at that time. Mr. Bissell stated there was a review of the plan by the JCS and that Gen. Gray would later elaborate on that.

17. Mr. Bissell stated that by 12 April the plan had crystallized but we still had no "go ahead" signal, whereupon Mr. Kennedy asked how we came to that conclusion and how was it actually worked out. He asked if anyone formally presented a plan for approval. When actually did the President and others examine the plan and give it their approval. Gen. Gray stated that 16 March was the date. Gen. Taylor asked if it was approved on that date and Mr. Bissell stated it was approved as the plan to be implemented but that no "go ahead" signal was given. Gen. Taylor inquired as to what the JCS had done with respect to the plan and Adm. Burke replied that on 15 March 1961, the JCS was briefed on the alternate plan(s) and that the evaluation concluded that the alternate Zapata plan was considered the most feasible. He then started to discuss the three alternatives when Gen. Gray interrupted with the suggestion that the discussion was getting out of step; that the Trinidad plan should be discussed first and then the three alternative plans.

18. [REDACTED] Presentation--Before going into the details of the Trinidad plan, [REDACTED] said he would like to provide background information showing what factors were available and factors not available in connection with planning of that Project. He stated that when one is confronted with the requirement for non-attributability you introduce tremendous difficulties for a covert plan. For example, in a regular military operation, you know what forces you have, bases, state of training, etc., but in a PM covert plan you don't know much of anything. He said that last September when he joined the Project, the question of bases for the strike force and for supplying guerrillas in the mountains was not resolved. The only bases available were two bases in Guatemala. These were training bases, a shelf on the side of a volcano with room for 200 men at most (we ended up with 1400.) These were the training facilities - which were very poor.

19. The air base in Guatemala was 750 miles from Central Cuba--too far for supply operations. C-46's could not reach Eastern Cuba with satisfactory loads. C-54's could. The distance was too great for tactical air operations using B-26 or smaller planes. All sorts of studies were made to locate a satisfactory base. The United States was ruled out but [REDACTED] did not agree with the reasoning therefore.

[REDACTED] Consequently, we had no base from which to conduct satisfactory operations. However, we later learned that President Somoza of Nicaragua would cooperate and we selected Puerto Cabezas as the site since it had an airfield, dock facilities, and other advantages. We were still 500 miles from Central Cuba, still far but feasible.

20. Late in the autumn of 1960 we feared we would lose Guatemala bases and recruiting stopped, and we looked around for other bases. We could never be sure how many troops we could get as the recruiting was often slowed down due to political infighting of exile leaders.

21. Training--We did not have facilities for PM training. Last fall we only had four CIA personnel. On 28 October, [REDACTED] requested three

[REDACTED] We were facing amphibious operations, the most difficult of all military operations, and we had no ships. The question was: should we buy ships, recruit crews, or should we charter ships? We finally bought two LCI's in Miami, not fitted for landing troops but we modified them, we recruited Cuban crews, it took months (until January 1961) to get the ships to sea. The crews were made up of former Cuban navy personnel. We also recruited American contract personnel for these ships, the two LCI's. These two ships could carry only 150 men so this did not answer our problem. We had to charter ships. We contacted a Cuban ship owner named Garcia who had six small freighters of the 1500-2000 ton variety. This man, Garcia, offered the most and asked the least of all the Cubans we were in touch with. He asked that we cover the operating expenses. At first we wanted two ships for our 750-man force. We armed the LCI's and kept them as command ships. We also used them for other operations such as the raid on the Santiago refinery.

22. Air Picture--This was a problem in the autumn of 1960. We had few trained crews. There was always the question of whether the Cubans would measure up. We didn't know whether the air force was adequate. The covert approach is extremely difficult. PM operations of any size at all cannot be covert. [REDACTED] commented that we may have to adjust our thinking to the need for coming out in the open as our enemies are doing.

23. Policy Questions--Policy questions had a bearing on our plans. Some unanswered questions by early January were these:

- Will a strike be conducted?
- Will an air operation be permitted?
- Will American pilots be used?
- Will Nicaragua be used as a base?

[REDACTED] then read from a paper dated 4 January 1961, which he had prepared. This paper outlined the current status of our operation and set forth policy questions which had to be resolved. ( [REDACTED] provided a copy of this paper for inclusion in the record. Consequently, no attempt is made to reproduce it in these minutes.) (TN3-A)

24. From the above mentioned paper, [REDACTED] outlined the concept of the strike operation:

1. Securing of a small lodgement on Cuban soil by 750-man force.
2. This to be preceded by tactical air strike which would destroy the air force, naval vessels.

- ( ) [REDACTED]
3. Following this other military targets would be attacked, such as tank parks, artillery parks, motor transport, etc.
4. Close air support for strike force on D-Day and thereafter.
5. The initial mission was to seize a small area preferably with an air field and access to the sea, with contingency plans for air drops if field and port not available.
6. Force should try to survive and not break out until time opportune or U.S. intervened.
7. Expected widespread popular support and general uprisings.
8. If this did not develop, there was the possibility that the fighting might bring on assistance from other Latin American countries and the U.S. with the resultant fall of Castro.
9. Plan called for continuation of regular PM operations: sabotage, guerrillas, etc.
10. If driven from the beachhead, the force would continue guerrilla operations.

25. Gen. Taylor stated that this concept raised fundamental questions. What was the magnitude of the air cover you expected and did you expect to stay on shore indefinitely, and if so what size force did you plan to employ? [REDACTED] said that the force was to have been composed of 750 men and that they expected to have an airforce of 15 B-26's, whereupon Gen. Taylor questioned whether 15 B-26's could have done all that was expected. [REDACTED] explained that the plan was to eliminate the enemy air force. We anticipated that he had twelve operational planes, including six B-26's, 4 T-33's, and from two to four Sea Furies. This turned out to be a fairly accurate estimate. We felt that fifteen B-26's could do the job.

26. Gen. Taylor asked on what intelligence did we base out belief that there would be popular uprisings. [REDACTED] said that we had our own agents up and down the length of Cuba - some [REDACTED] agents including [REDACTED] radio operators - who gave us a picture of large numbers of people begging for arms in order to fight Castro. We had difficulty supplying the arms via the air drops. The Cuban pilots were not sufficiently qualified for this work. The flights were rarely opposed but the aircraft encountered difficulty in finding the drop zones. ([REDACTED] commented that at no time were our surface craft interdicted by Cuban navy craft and surface deliveries were much more successful).

27. [REDACTED] then quoted other extracts from his paper of January 4, summarizing the size of our air force - ten B-26's but only five pilots; seven C-54's; a few C-46's - with grossly inadequate transport crews. Five hundred Cubans training in Guatemala. FRO (Fronte) recruitment not going satisfactorily. Special recruiting teams being sent from Camps to Miami to assist. Expect to have 750 men in time but unless Special Forces training they could not be ready before late 1961. All this time, [REDACTED] said, Castro was building up his military capability and in September we thought he still had 75% of the population behind him, although his popularity was then declining. Gen. Taylor asked in retrospect what would have been the best timing (for the strike to have occurred?) and [REDACTED] replied early March.

28. [REDACTED] said at the time of the preparation of his paper of 4 January we did not know whether the new administration would approve the project and this needed to be resolved immediately in order that the operation could be stopped and considerable expense saved. He therefore recommended that the Director of CIA attempt to get a decision from the President-Elect. [REDACTED] felt that if the decision was made in mid-January the force could be ready to move by the end of February. We were then under pressure from the Guatemalan government. Time was not entirely in our favor. We anticipated that Castro would soon have a jet capability. Heavy equipment was being assembled throughout the country and the establishment of a police state was advancing rapidly. In his paper he recommended that the operation be carried out not later than 1 March 1961.

29. [REDACTED] terminated reading his paper. Mr. Dulles asked what disposition was made of it and [REDACTED] said it was directed to Chief of WH/4 (chief of the Cuban operation). [REDACTED], C/WH/4, said he directed it to higher authority. Gen. Taylor asked for the identity of the higher authority and was told it went to the Chief of the Division [REDACTED], the Assistant Deputy for Plans (Mr. Barnes), and the Deputy for Plans (Mr. Bissell). Mr. Bissell stated that the paper did not go much further than his office, and added that we did eventually get the air crews, the B-26's, etc. [REDACTED] American contract pilots were readied. He stated that with respect to the major policy decisions raised by [REDACTED], these issues will emerge when limitations on use of the tactical air force are discussed. [REDACTED] commented that we battled with State for months and we only got watered down more and more for our efforts.

30. Mr. Kennedy asked why, if [REDACTED] presumptions and conclusions were correct, and if State and others felt it wasn't feasible or desirable, wasn't the project called off? Mr. Bissell explained that what actually happened was that [REDACTED] position was stated and first there was agreement on air strikes on D minus 2, D minus 1, and D-Day; and then later an absolute minimum calling for strikes on D minus 1 and D-Day. And what finally was called for was a maximum effort on D-Day.

31. Mr. Kennedy asked [REDACTED] if he would have approved the operation as it ultimately came to occur - that is, would he have or did he approve of the watered down plan. [REDACTED] replied that he did not approve but must say this with qualifications. He said he always maintained that we must get rid of the opposing air force. He insisted the three major airfields must be attacked. He was not in favor of limiting the number of aircraft (he eventually got the number raised) - he was not satisfied with the limited application of air power and he thought we would have had a satisfactory sweep on D-Day of all the Cuban airfields. Gen. Taylor asked how many planes we had on D-Day and [REDACTED] stated fifteen. Admiral Burke asked if all the factors raised by [REDACTED] were ever listed in check off form - and were they checked off as achieved? The reply was that we had no formalized check list but we knew where we stood as we went along. [REDACTED] said we had the capability on the morning of D-Day with the 15 B-26's but we weren't given an opportunity to do the job.

32. [REDACTED] stated that prior to D-Day we had an accurate count of the enemy air force and knew where every craft was kept. He had a total of 36. [REDACTED] described them by category. We estimated 50% of these planes were in flying condition. On the D-minus 2 strike we destroyed over 70% of their air power. We had 15 planes left to employ to knock out the remainder. [REDACTED] showed the enemy planes were concentrated at San Antonio. On D-Day one Sea Fury was knocked out and another fell into the ocean. They were down to three T-33's. Gen. Taylor asked then why did the strike fail? [REDACTED] replied that we had strikes planned for San Antonio, Libertad, and 11 other targets, but were not permitted to carry them out. Gen. Taylor commented that we had done well with our air force and [REDACTED] replied that we had them pinned down and we based this belief on [REDACTED] and photography. He added that every aircraft we lost was due to the T-33's. Mr. Kennedy asked how many aircraft did Castro have on D-Day. [REDACTED] said he had 2 Sea Furies, B-26's, and 3 T-33's. [REDACTED] repeated that we had planned a fifteen plane raid at dawn on D-Day but were not permitted to carry it out. Mr. Dulles asked if subsequent events bore out the correctness of our air O/B and [REDACTED] replied in the affirmative.

33. Mr. Kennedy asked for information on the report that MIG's were in the air. [REDACTED] said that MIG's did not appear until the final date. They may have been in crates and quickly assembled. Mr. Dulles commented that aerial photography never picked up any MIG's. Mr. Bissell said we had no reports from agents of MIG air flights. Gen. Taylor asked concerning the characteristics of the T-33's and was told they are jet trainers armed with two 50 cal. machine guns. Gen. Gray said that on D plus 1 a request was made of our destroyers to attempt to locate the field. [REDACTED] said the report of MIG's in crates indicated San Julian air base. [REDACTED] terminated his remarks by saying that as of D-Day the air picture was in our favor.

34. TRINIDAD PLAN. [REDACTED] then proceeded to discuss the Trinidad Plan. He utilized charts showing the composition of the strike force and maps of the areas discussed. First he described the composition and organization of the assault force and how it was trained. He said at first there was no one to train the troops so he sent [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] with directives to conduct individual training, small unit training, etc., and an 8 week course was provided. With large influx of recruits, concurrent recruit, small unit and combined training had to be conducted. Gen. Taylor asked where they found room in view of [REDACTED] previous statement of the small shelf on the volcano side, and [REDACTED] explained that we finally got permission to use a finca belonging to Mr. Alejos of Guatemala for training purposes. However, firing practice was done in the mountains.

35. Noting that Tanks appeared on the chart, Mr. Kennedy asked if tanks did get ashore and if they were camouflaged or disguised. [REDACTED] said that tanks were put ashore and Gen. Gray added that these were the same type of tanks given to other countries. [REDACTED] stated that we trained the tank crews at Ft. Knox and we had no trouble whatsoever. The Cubans knew where they were being trained and [REDACTED] said that was a good example of how our own soil is better suited for training from security and other standpoints.

36. In arriving at the Trinidad plan, [REDACTED] said that he studied the entire island carefully. He then decided that the Trinidad area with the nearby Escambray mountains was the place. Gen. Taylor asked if he had the benefit of photography in reaching his decision and [REDACTED] said he had no photography until one flight was flown in November with not too satisfactory results. He then proceeded to describe the Trinidad area - the town of some 18,000 population, the nearby port to the south, named Casilda - with its docks - many good beaches for our purposes - good guerrilla country nearby with hills of 2,500 - 4,000 feet in which from 600-1,000 guerrillas were reported to be active who had been able to maintain themselves for six months, but were eventually eliminated. Although these were small groups with little equipment and poor supplies, it nevertheless took Castro six months to eliminate them. Therefore in considering the Trinidad plan it was felt that the force could if necessary move to the mountains and could exist in such terrain indefinitely. There were no approaches from the North that Castro could use, only other main road was from Santa Clara - this had a bridge over a river and a railroad bridge - and we were planning to knock out these two bridges. Other approach was from Cienfuegos - with bridges. The area was suitable for isolation. Also there was reason to believe that the Trinidad population was friendly. They had been supporting the guerrillas in the hills. We expected to pick up recruits from the Trinidad civilian population and we planned to bring in arms packs for 4,000 men and rapidly expand our forces. Another advantage if the force succeeded in maintaining itself and eventually breaking out was the possibility that we could have severed Cuba in the middle, creating great problems for Castro.

37. Gen. Taylor inquired as to the date of the plan. [REDACTED] said it was written in January and the JCS was briefed on the plan on 31 January. He remarked that the JCS, in an independent study, had also selected the Trinidad site as the most suitable for this type of operation. Gen. Taylor asked how did the JCS get into this matter and Gen. Gray replied that the JCS had already been asked to come up with a likely spot and that they had in mind a small invasion force.

38. [REDACTED] then reviewed the strike plan as follows:

D-Day - landing

Prior D-Day - destruction air force

D-minus 1 - attack aircraft on ground - also tank parks, artillery, etc.

H minus 6 - feinting operation off the West Coast of Pinar del Rio - destroy bridges

H Hour - Assault force lands on beaches - seizes high ground - another company moves inland and establishes self on forward slopes - another company on a separate beach - clear Casilda - airborne troops drop in heights over Trinidad.

39. Gen. Taylor inquired as to the known presence of Castro forces in the area. [REDACTED] said we could never pin down the exact location of his forces. There were some 40,000 militia in the general area - with about 5,000 militia encircling the Escambray mountains. These were not making an aggressive effort to join battle with the guerrillas but would catch them as they came out for food. We evaluated the militia fighting qualities on what they did in the Escambrays and this was very low. He then went on describing the plan by saying that after seizure of the objectives we would enlist and arm civilians, we would use the hospital and other buildings for the force - we would coordinate with local civilian leaders and make contact with local guerrillas. We would use the local airport for resupply - but the airport could not take a B-26. In the event Trinidad could not be held, the plan was for the force to withdraw to the Escambrays where they would be supplied by air drops. This, [REDACTED] said, was the beauty of the Trinidad Plan - it provided an alternative and safe area to move into if the original phase failed to achieve its objectives. Gen. Cobell commented that the concept called for a dawn landing. [REDACTED] said the air strike called for attack on three air fields and the Managua military base, which had tanks and equipment which would have easily been destroyed by use of napalm but we were not authorized to use napalm in the operation. Gen. Taylor asked who said napalm could not be employed and [REDACTED] replied that it was a decision of the National Government. [REDACTED] listed in detail

all the targets which we had selected for air attack - which included in addition to obvious military targets - the Havana power plant, microwave stations, refineries, etc. - and said all these things we wanted to do. Gen. Taylor asked if the air requirement varied with the change of plans and [REDACTED] replied no.

40. Gen. Taylor asked aside from terrain what else was favorable and [REDACTED] repeated his references to friendly population, nearby guerrillas, beaches as good as those of Zapata. He said the presence of enemy forces was a disadvantage of this plan as compared with the Zapata Plan. We did not think there was anyone at Zapata. Gen. Gray said that as far as could be determined there was only a police battalion at Trinidad. Admiral Burke commented that the size of the air field at Trinidad was another disadvantage - the field at Zapata being larger. [REDACTED] reiterated that the principal advantage was being able to fall back into the mountains. At Zapata we presupposed an uprising but the beachhead did not last long enough. At Trinidad we might have had favorable civilian reaction - one agent told us he had 2,500 men wanting arms.

41. Mr. Kennedy asked if we had any communications from the island after D-Day indicating a desire on the part of the people to rise, and [REDACTED] said yes there were requests for arms but air drops without the use of American pilots had never been successful. Gen. Taylor asked if there was an annex to the plan for supplying arms to anyone who did rise. Mr. Bissell stated that we had airplanes and supplies and were ready to respond to agent calls. We could have responded - there were 19 requests - most of them before D-Day. Mr. Kennedy asked if there were any after D-Day and [REDACTED] said yes, but we couldn't service them since our aircraft were committed to try to deliver supplies to the strike force which had lost its supply ship.

42. Gen. Gray recalled that the Agency had prepared a summary of agent radio communications received - and messages from the beaches - on D plus 2 (TAG-B) and asked that a copy of that summary, which he found quite impressive, be furnished for the record.

43. Mr. Bissell said that we had anticipated domination of the air and therefore could have made daylight deliveries of arms in response to the many calls we had received. As it turned out we did not have the means with which to respond.

44. [REDACTED] then informed the group that we had on hand one of the American pilots who survived the morning raid, and since he was planning to leave the city tonight, asked if the committee would like to hear his story this afternoon. Gen. Taylor said he would like to hear him after we finish the actual scenario and this should be sometime after lunch. The hour of 4 p.m. was set.

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45. Gen. Taylor asked what happened to the Trinidad Plan. [REDACTED] replied that it was always opposed by the State Department - also the President wanted something that was less like an invasion. Mr. Bissell read from the record of the 15 March meeting which reported that Trinidad was not acceptable since it appeared like a WWII assault operation. Gen. Taylor asked if the Plan was rejected on 15 March and Mr. Bissell replied no, on 11 March. Admiral Burke commented that on 3 February the JCS had generally this same plan. Mr. Bissell said that the JCS first evaluated this plan early in February and Admiral Burke said that the JCS had made a number of recommendations aimed at strengthening the plan.

46. Mr. Bissell stated that we considered a variety of alternatives - one suggestion was that we seize a remote area and build an airfield from which to operate. [REDACTED] then described the ground rules which had been established for the next plan:

1. It must call for a quiet, night landing operation. - nothing that might be viewed as spectacular.
2. It must include seizure of an airfield that would accommodate up to B-26 planes in order that air strikes which were to commence at dawn could be attributed to that field.

[REDACTED] said we looked all over for an airfield in Oriente province but could find none that could handle a B-26. We built up the concept for an operation at Preston but the field would not support B-26's. We reconsidered the Isle of Pines - but rejected it because there were from 7,500-15,000 troops there and there were no suitable beaches for night landings. We thought of another plan for Trinidad involving landing troops who would go directly into the mountains - but there was no airfield. Finally, through photography, we found what we thought was a usable field - this was in the Zapata area - and this is what led us to this area. The plan was hastily put together. We got started about 15 March - after the 11 March meeting. An error in photographic interpretation had occurred. We believed there were 4,900 usable feet of runway in northern Zapata. One of the disadvantages was the 18 mile bay which meant we would have trouble getting people up there in daylight hours. We found a 4,100 foot field at Playa Giron. We would never have adopted the Zapata Plan if we had known that he had coordinated forces that would close in and fight as they did. The air field requirement was what led us into Zapata.

47. [REDACTED] then described the moving of the troops from Guatemala to Nicaragua which was accomplished on three successive nights without incident. We were employing four merchant ships and two LCI's. They fanned out upon leaving Puerto Cabezas and later rendezvoused at approximately 40 miles off the coast. [REDACTED] paid tribute to [REDACTED] for his performance in handling the fleet. The ships formed convoy and proceeded to a point 5,000 yards off the beach.

AFTERNOON SESSION - 24 April 1961.

(Note: This account of the afternoon session is not complete inasmuch as the recording secretary was not present during the first portion of the session, having missed approximately 45 minutes of the meeting. However, the notes prepared by Col. Inglisido, who was present during the entire afternoon session, should cover this missing period).

43. (Gen. Gray was in the midst of discussing the JCS evaluation of the Trinidad Plan when note taking was resumed). He said the scheme of maneuver was basically sound. There was a need for civil officer type people to coordinate with the population, etc., and this was done. The original idea was that the guerrillas would join up with the Strike Force. The JCS thought it best to maintain a corridor and establish a link - he pointed out that one road runs from Santa Clara to the area - and a secure route for moving up into the hills. Without interference from the air, we estimated the Cuban Army could move men and materiel to the scene by D plus 2. At time of assessment there was one regiment of Cuban army near Santa Clara. We also were told the Cuban army was not concentrated but spread out. We figured it would take them a day to concentrate and another day to move the 100 miles to the scene.

49. Gen. Gray indicated that the publicity which developed during the final weeks of the project, much of it centering around the Revolutionary Council and its alleged plans, gave Castro notice that something was in the wind and time to mobilize his forces. [REDACTED] explained that we were given the requirement of establishing a broad based revolutionary council. He said Cubans cannot keep quiet and before you knew it we had a Roman Circus on our hands - leaks to press, etc., both in Miami and New York. Gen. Taylor asked if the Revolutionary Council was aware of the operation. [REDACTED] stated that the first word they had that the operation was going was on the evening of Friday, 14 April. [REDACTED] and Mr. Barnes had gone to New York City to brief Dr. Miro - had met with the group - had dinner - and at midnight [REDACTED] told Dr. Miro that at dawn on the following day some action would take place. [REDACTED] cautioned Dr. Miro that there always seems to be a leak and that in the interests of the sons of some of the members of the Council, including Miro, and other relatives - [REDACTED] told Dr. Miro to keep this information very much to himself. Dr. Miro said he would not even tell Dr. Varona, another member of the Council, and added that he would keep all members of the Council together the entire night.

50. Gen. Taylor said that what was inferred was that all this hoopla made execution of the plan more difficult and Gen. Gray said yes - that this permitted Castro to prepare - but if the target had been the Trinidad area he would not have been ready until the afternoon of D-Day. Mr. Barnes said that there was a great deal in the press - Tad Szulz and others - guessing

[REDACTED]

as to dates - and all this developed during the last week - and this could not have been anticipated. [REDACTED] commented that one or two of Mr. Reston's articles in the New York Times two or three days before the date were not at all helpful. He said that despite this we were able to move people from Guatemala to Nicaragua and the first anyone knew about the invasion was when they hit the beaches.

51. Gen. Gray said that another miscalculation was that the Cuban Army was not coordinated and thus we expected the strike force would be able to resist attack. In this respect Trinidad would have been difficult terrain for launching of attacks. While the Cuban Army could eventually have reduced the beach head, it was Gen. Gray's opinion that the beach could have been held for seven days. In considering the Trinidad Plan it was not considered that U.S. overt intervention would be necessary since the force could get to the hills. The ships were loaded with supplies on D minus 21, but it was always clearly understood that the President could always call off the plan. The ultimate success of the Plan depended on political factors - uprisings, possible OAS action, etc.

52. Gen. Taylor asked what provisions, if any, had been made for follow up support. Gen. Gray said that CIA was training additional personnel. He said Mr. Berle had sounded out certain South American countries but got no promise of military support. The plan called for the arming of local volunteers who were expected to join up with the force. [REDACTED] said we had approximately 300 additional untrained troops - about 107 in Guatemala and the balance in Miami. Gen. Cabell pointed out that the original concept called for a 750 man force but that we actually committed in advance all our 1400 men rather than hold out for follow up. Gen. Gray said the key to the plan was popular uprisings all over the Island - which would pin down the militia in other areas. The militia in this area had proved to be friendly to the guerrillas and for this reason Castro had to bring others in from elsewhere.

53. Gen. Taylor asked Gen. Gray concerning the 30-70 evaluation they had given to the plan. Gen. Gray said this referred to the Trinidad Plan - that the percentages were roughly 30-70 and never ran more than 40-60. He then said that about this time Mr. Berle was appointed coordinator of Latin American affairs and Ambassador Willauer faded out of the picture. He said he had had meetings with the Berle group. Gen. Taylor asked if Mr. Berle got into the military aspects of the plan and Gen. Gray said not to any important degree - that he was mostly concerned with the political aspects. [REDACTED] said that Mr. Berle was given one briefing on the Trinidad Plan.

54. Gen. Gray then stated that on 23 February a JCS evaluation team went to Guatemala to assess the troops and summarized their conclusions as follows: Based on general review of the military portion of the project and evaluation of the combat efficiency of the forces, such forces could attain

[REDACTED]

the initiative - but the ultimate success of the operation would depend on the extent the strike forces served as a catalyst. Gen. Taylor said this new evaluation of the plan expected them to get ashore all right but success depended on their serving as a catalyst to a general uprising. Gen. Gray answered affirmatively. Gen. Gray stated that Col. Farwater thought the air force was very well prepared but made certain suggestions for improvement.

55. Evaluation of the Zapata Plan. Gen. Gray said that the JCS first saw the Zapata Plan on 15 March and gave it a favorable evaluation as an alternate plan. This, he said, was done hurriedly. The JCS was briefed on the plan on 13 March; prepared its evaluation on the 14th of March, presented it on the 15th March and submitted it to the President on the 16th of March.

56. Mr. Bissell said three other alternatives were considered:

1. The Isle of Pines
2. The Preston Area
3. Alternate Trinidad Plan -  
(landing at night, into the hills and at daylight attack backwards to the beach head.)

With respect to No. 3, [REDACTED] said the plan really was for the force to move into the hills - and not attack backwards - and was a modification of the original Trinidad Plan.

57. Gen. Gray said that of the alternatives mentioned it was considered that the Zapata Plan was the most feasible but not as feasible as the original Trinidad Plan. Zapata depended on control of the air and the ability to secure the exits to make difficult the movement of enemy forces into the area. The plan called for the mining of all approaches but this was not executed. The evaluations were the essential part of the JCS contribution - however, we attended most meetings. Gen. Taylor asked if the evaluation which Gen. Gray had summarized was approved by the JCS and Gen. Gray responded affirmatively. Of the three alternatives the Zapata Plan was the best.

58. Mr. Kennedy said wouldn't you say that the JCS had approved this plan? Admiral Burke responded by saying that the paper does not say so - but in effect the JCS approved this plan - felt it had a reasonable chance of success. Admiral Burke added that the original plan had the area they would have selected - Trinidad. Gen. Gray stated that at no time did the JCS say that the Zapata Plan should not be carried out. Mr. Bissell said that the 16 March meeting summed it up as follows:

Trinidad Plan would provide more decisive results  
at greater initial risk

[REDACTED]

Zapata Plan provides less decisive results - and slower results - with less initial risk

Mr. Bissell commented that we felt and hoped the Zapata Plan would be less risky but recognized its limitations - less chance of a build up from friendly population.'

59. Gen. Taylor said there appeared to be two points: At no point did the JCS recommend doing it - it merely commented on three alternatives - but where we made our mistake - we should have said - but did not - that this plan was not feasible. We had an opportunity to do more and we were responsible for approving it. Mr. Dulles stated that all the plans were exposed at high level. Admiral Burke commented that one difficulty was that Gen. Lemnitzer was there by himself - then corrected himself to say that Gen. Gray was with Gen. Lemnitzer at the high level meetings.

60. Gen. Gray stated that as we became associated we became more interested in trying to make it go. Mr. Kennedy asked if this wasn't the key to the whole thing - this wanting it to go? Mr. Dulles said we had these alternatives - we could carry out the plan or we could demobilize the strike force. Gen. Gray said that if we had ever written a National Concept - we would have had to rewrite it continually. Admiral Burke said that there naturally was confusion during the change of administration. We should have formalized this thing much earlier and in greater detail. The trouble was that only a few people of the Admiral's staff knew about it.

61. Gen. Taylor asked if the possibility of uprisings was discussed among all of you and Mr. Dulles answered yes. Mr. Dulles said the first plan was the shock plan - and in this plan we hadn't counted on immediate uprisings - this was longer range. He said there were objections on the political side to the shock effects - and we couldn't count on it succeeding.

62. Mr. Kennedy asked what the objective was on landing 600-1000 men on the shore. Mr. Dulles said to obtain a beachhead which could be built up. Mr. Kennedy then asked how a beachhead could be held against 300,000 troops - or against even 30,000 or 25,000. Mr. Dulles said the enemy would not have been able to concentrate all his troops on one spot. Mr. Kennedy then said that he thought that uprisings were an essential part of the JCS evaluation. Gen. Gray said that it did not anticipate immediate uprisings - but uprisings on a slower basis. Mr. Kennedy then directed a question to Admiral Burke asking if it was the Admiral's understanding that 1400 men could land - and without benefit of uprisings - could maintain their position for several weeks. Admiral Burke said they thought they might be able to hold their position but if they could not, that they would then become guerrillas. Gen. Gray said that we thought the Cuban air force would be knocked out. He said the men demonstrated they could fight effectively at night. Mr. Bissell added that we expected a landing in Pinar del Rio on D plus 7. [REDACTED] added that we had reports of men wanting to join but reiterated that the real key was control of the air.

[REDACTED]

63. Gen. Taylor then asked where is the concept? Gen. Gray said it is in the plan. The objective did not change. Here is the mission: To invade island of Cuba - with amphibious force - hold beachhead - provide catalyst for uprising - move in as guerrillas if beachhead not sustained. Gen. Taylor (checking language of mission) read: " --alternative 3 has all the pre-requisites necessary and would be able to sustain itself for several weeks but inaccessibility of population would effect support of Cuban population..." Gen. Cabell remarked that we meant joining up of forces and not necessarily civilian uprisings. Gen. Taylor stated it still becomes a choice between 3 - but with Trinidad preferred.

64. Mr. Bissell stated that the language about sustaining for several weeks indicates a change of thinking - a slower development with less prospect of initial success. If the area could have been held for two weeks there was a good probability of ultimate success - for with no air opposition we could have knocked out his microwave and forced him to voice - we could have learned his plans - we could have reinforced the brigade with another 500 men - the logistic problem would not have been difficult - but we did not knock out his air. Gen. Cabell stated that maritime re-supply would have been a factor - with no air opposition - and would have had an effect on the outcome.

65. Gen. Gray stated that following the decision on 16 March that the Zapata Plan should be pursued, the Inter-Departmental Group on 22 March developed and finalized an agreed list of tasks. For example, the State Department would take care of recognition, etc. This paper served the useful purpose of coordinating our planning.

66. On 28 March the JCS approved letters of instructions to Cinclant and Conant and we implemented the plan to improve the Miami defenses. We tested the plan and had planes, etc., to move in to protect the Miami area. Naval support was carried out by the Carrier ESSEX and 7 destroyers. Destroyers escorted the invading ships - close at night but at a distance during the day. Gen. Taylor asked if they were authorized to engage. They were authorized to engage if attacked but under these circumstances the whole force was to have been diverted - since we were protecting shipping and not assisting an invasion. The rules of engagement changed several times as the operation proceeded. Our job was mostly one of support during two phases:

Covert support - D-Day to D-minus 3  
Logistic support - during build up phase

67. CIA was in a position to double and quadruple the force. We planned logistic supply as part of this build up. If things went well they might have built up in the Cienfuegos area in D plus 30. We provided arms packs for 30,000 men in addition to CIA planning for 5,000 packs. Packs for 15,000 men were actually loaded on ships and headed for the area. Also recoilless rifles, mortars, jeeps, trucks, etc. We were also providing for the overt

[REDACTED]

phase under several conditions. For example, if the U.S. recognized this force (one of the Council members, Capt. Artine, went in with the brigade). State was planning on recognizing the government but no State or diplomatic representative would have been sent in until Havana was taken. We also considered possibility of supporting the force in the event a third country recognized them before we did. In addition we had one Marine hospital to move to Vieques.

68. Gen. Taylor asked about the evacuation plan and Gen. Taylor said it was planned to employ the LCI's and planes from the air strip. Gen. Gray said a separate war room was set up in the JCS - the regular war room was cut out. Only a limited number were cut in - this list included Adm. Dennison. [REDACTED] of the Agency was on the ESSEX. It was a cumbersome type of organization but it worked. There was good commo. There was good liaison. Decisions were implemented quickly.

69. Admiral Burke stated that the trouble was the delays - commo from there to Washington and back was fairly good - but there were always delays - sometimes of several hours - what was needed was a commander on the spot to make decisions. Another thing - although the commo was good from CEF (?) to Washington - there was not enough between the Naval forces and the ships - took a couple of days to find out that two ships were one and the same - that different names were being used for the same ship.

70. Gen. Gray said that there should have been an Inter-Departmental group working on the concept and keeping the President informed in writing. This would have eliminated the fact that up to the last date there was not a meeting of minds. It was not clear whether there was going to be an air strike or not. Mr. Barnes said it could not have been achieved the way it went along - after the Trinidad plan was scrapped we were forced to come up with new concepts and new approaches to meet objections which were being raised.

71. Admiral Burke said that politically it could not have been done. We made our mistake in not drawing up what we thought the concept was and presenting it to the State Department and CIA. We did not grab it hard enough - partly because we were holding it so tight - therefore Gen. Gray's group couldn't get advice from the people who could have given it - because they weren't cut in. If he had been working under an agreed concept it could have been done better.

72. Mr. Bissell said that what he had read from the April 12 paper came near to this. Many of the suggested acts that came up involved political policy decisions of great import and these had been made in advance. Example, question whether Navy Jets in the air would give protection to B-57's giving close ground support. Decision was made that support should be given - this required high level policy and was a reversal of policy re engagement of U.S. forces. We could have had a concept of use of U.S. forces. Gen. Taylor said: You talk of concepts but the concepts didn't change.

[REDACTED]

Admiral Burke stated we would have task for example to cover by Naval air - this came very late so that by the time we were supposed to execute this we were at some distance from the area. Gen. Gray said that if we had had an agreed national plan we would have had to face up to the decisions which we got piecemeal - re rules of engagement. It should have been in an overall plan.

73. Gen. Taylor asked how can we do better - about the political restraints - how can we do this. Gen. Gray replied: by putting the political factors into the plan at the beginning. Admiral Burke commented that the President must have been confused by the many different people who were advising him. Gen. Gray said that once we got State in on agreed plans, Mr. Braddock came up with the answers. We should get State into the plan at the outset.

74. Gen. Taylor remarked that after the rejection of the Trinidad Plan we were racing against the clock. Gen. Gray said that he had wanted to war game the plan and that that is what should have been done. Gen. Taylor then asked what were the factors that necessitated speed. Gen. Gray said the rainy season was approaching and this would affect not only ground fighting but flying conditions. There was the problem of the Jets which Castro was supposed to be receiving soon. Info that some Jet trainees had returned from Czechoslovakia. [REDACTED] said there were other factors: We were holding 1400 men in impossible conditions. The President of Guatemala was pushing us. Also American newsmen were after the story and some of the troops and airmen were threatening to desert.

75. INTERROGATION OF [REDACTED]. At this juncture [REDACTED] and a contract flyer who participated in the project, was received by the Committee. [REDACTED] said that he had drawn up a small resume and that if the committee was agreeable he would (TAG-C) half-read and half-comment on that resume. (Presumably the resume will become a part of the record.) Consequently only the questioning will be recorded here.

76. [REDACTED] asked [REDACTED] what happened to the original plan for D-Day. He replied that he was exposed to the targets. He thought the people were familiar with the original plan. It changed 180°. We were to use maximum effort against air fields, microwave stations, (forcing use of radio voice) - we hoped this chaos - plus propaganda would do the job. [REDACTED] asked what were the orders. [REDACTED] replied that they were ordered to use two aircraft on each target except that only one would be used on air base near Guantanamo. Request was granted late for use of other aircraft. We were pushed for briefing of crews - we didn't have time for target study - the whole situation was cramped. After D-Day it was obvious that not all enemy aircraft was destroyed - we thought we knew how many he had but he was turning them around quickly - our turn around time was 7 hours round trip with 30 minutes over the target.

77. Mr. Kennedy asked if these pilots were Americans or Cubans and [REDACTED] replied they were both Americans and Cubans. They got along well together and both were motivated by patriotic reasons.

[REDACTED] 21 [REDACTED] 1000-800

73. [REDACTED] said that the first attack (D minus 2) only served to make Castro mad and gave him time to re-group his forces. Some of the flyers saw Navy protection - others did no. At Puerto Cabezas there was uncertainty as to whether they were enemy or friendly. Admiral Burke stated that on D-1 and D plus 1 the Navy fliers were over and that on D plus 2 authority was given for one hour of coverage. [REDACTED] was asked if MIGS were involved. He said that as much as he would like to he can't say that MIGS were involved. He said he did not believe they were. He said he debriefed B-26 and other pilots and they saw none. The reports of Navy intervention may have helped in air battles but as far as Cuban personnel were concerned they took it for granted that they had Navy cover.

79. Mr. Kennedy asked if the pilots expected they would have help or assistance. Were they ever told they would not have assistance? [REDACTED] replied that they were not told that they would not have assistance and he did not think they expected military assistance. Mr. Bissell said that on D plus 2 they were briefed to expect Navy cover and protection and beginning at that time they may have expected assistance. [REDACTED] said the news was a great morale booster to people in the Puerto Cabezas area and when it did not materialize morale was affected adversely. Cuban crews aborted and without this assurance of assistance American pilots would not have participated.

30. Gen. Taylor asked what targets they found on the beach. [REDACTED] replied that on D plus 1 they caught a large column of trucks. An American pilot "bounced" those trucks and from 15 to 20 Russian tanks - three B-26's made passes at the trucks and hurt them badly. This was Tuesday afternoon about 1300 hours local time. [REDACTED] remarked that [REDACTED] indicated they suffered 1300 casualties. Mr. Kennedy asked if [REDACTED] was able to tell where the fighting was taking place. He was unable to give a conclusive answer but thought the forces had moved up from Blue and Red beaches but never very far out. He remarked that the enemy had lots of anti-aircraft fire. Mr. Kennedy asked if they had this on D-Day. [REDACTED] said that they did not but that they moved it in very fast. Gen. Taylor asked where were they reporting flack and [REDACTED] replied: from all over - and with excellent marksmanship. Gen. Taylor asked how the air-ground commo worked and [REDACTED] said the Commo gear went down with the ship that was sunk and that there was no commo.

31. Mr. Kennedy asked if the Cuban pilots did well. [REDACTED] said they constantly found excuses for not flying. Gen. Taylor asked what percentage failed and [REDACTED] replied that only 35% were "ready to go" and you could count the number of "tigers" on one hand. [REDACTED] took exception to this saying that on D minus 2 we had eight aircraft up and that these made more than one pass over the target. [REDACTED] observed that at that time the sight of victory was present - but when they got thinking that they were losing it was different. He said that on the morning of D minus 2 he had to beg them to go. He observed that they were good until things started going wrong.

32. Mr. Kennedy asked where was the fighting going on at D plus 1 and D plus 2. Admiral Burke said that on D plus 2 Navy recon could find no

[REDACTED]

infantry - they were all apparently in the bush?" [REDACTED] said he had no information as to where the fighting was.

83. Mr. Kennedy asked if the Castro forces had come down the road on D plus 1 and Gen. Taylor remarked that he did not see how they could have gotten down there that fast even if they knew where the landing was coming. [REDACTED] said there were tanks in the Red Beach area on D-Day.

[REDACTED] expressed the personal opinion that there was not much fighting done. Gen. Taylor asked if there was any prearranged plan for use of smoke to identify our own people on the ground and [REDACTED] said that the air force was concerned exclusively with taking care of the "heavy stuff" and not attacking troops. Mr. Kennedy asked how long the party lasted on Red Beach and [REDACTED] thought it wasn't more than a matter of hours.

84. Mr. Dulles raised the question of the confusion in orders of going after the air fields on D plus 1. Mr. Bissell said that at some point on D-Day we received permission to strike the airfields that night - and then there was some talk of a strike at dusk - but ultimately it was authorized for that night but bad visibility and other factors prevented them carrying it out. [REDACTED] asked [REDACTED] if there was a lack of aircraft and

[REDACTED] replied that they were limited to the number of shells on any given target - we were limited to number of aircraft we could use. When we called it off we thought we were losing the war intentionally. This thought was based on the restrictions which had been placed on us.

85. The meeting terminated at approximately 1700 hours.

Distribution:

Original - Copy #1 - General Maxwell D. Taylor  
Copy #2 - Admiral Arleigh Burke  
Copy #3 - Allen W. Dulles  
Copy #4 - Attorney General Robert Kennedy  
Copy #5 - Major General D. W. Gray  
Copy #6 - Richard M. Bissell, Jr.  
Copy #7 - [REDACTED]  
Copy #8 - [REDACTED]

(The following notes are not verbatim, but represent the general substance of the statements made.)

[REDACTED] - I made a misstatement in regard to the decision not to employ napalm. This was not a national, high-level governmental decision, but the agency made this decision as they thought that the use of napalm would cause concern and public outcry.

GENERAL CABELL - Yes, that was in regard to its use in the Havana area in advance of the operation. However, it was authorized for use on the beachhead.

[REDACTED] - Another advantage to the Escambray area is that Castro never used his offensive aircraft against the guerrillas there and, additionally, tanks and artillery cannot be used in that terrain.

GENERAL TAYLOR - Would you summarize all the restraints and restrictions that were put on your operations by policy decisions and considerations?

[REDACTED] - In regard to the Zapata Plan there is the question of the naval LSD which had aboard it LCUs and LCPs. These landing craft were to haul troops, tanks and trucks and they were to be put ashore by Cuban crews. Because they did not wish to have the Cuban crews riding aboard the Navy's ship we had to run a rigmarole wherein the LSD rendezvoused with the Cuban Expeditionary Force ships and the Cuban crews went aboard the landing craft after they left the LSD.

MR. BISSELL - Though it was a sizable operation, as far as we know there were no rumors of the ships having left the port of embarkation, there was no outcry made in the press, and we have no indications that the point of landing was known.

GENERAL GRAY - We did receive a report of one airline sighting wherein their aircraft flew over the ships.

[REDACTED] - Bissell's suggestion in regard to having the ships fan out and then reconverge at a point of rendezvous [REDACTED] worked very well.

GENERAL TAYLOR - Then the only Americans present were in the LSD?

(At this point [REDACTED], employing a map of the area, gave a resume of the landing operations which were planned for Red, Blue and Green Beaches. This was extracted from the actual operational plan, or the Zapata Plan, a copy of which will be made available for the files. He also gave a resume of the paratroop operations, detailing the drops which were made in the vicinity of Red, Blue and Green Beaches.)

GENERAL TAYLOR - Were these night drops?

[REDACTED] - No, they were supposed to be made at dawn. However, they did not drop until 0730 hours. We are not sure as to just what happened as we have never heard from them.

MR. KENNEDY - How far away from the beachheads were these drops?

[REDACTED] (Pointing to map) - Drops were made to several points up to about 16 miles above the coast. (REDACTED) [REDACTED] then gave a short resume of the air support plan for the landings beginning with the air strikes at D-2 and he also gave the details of a diversionary landing to be made east of Guantanamo in Oriente Province.) - We had a team of 10 men equipped with radio who were supposed to go to this beach, mark it, and help bring the landing party ashore. As it turned out, the team leader, in conducting instructions of his group in the use of hand grenades, had an accident in which the grenade went off and blew up the detail.

MR. BISSELL - This was a diversionary landing which was supposed to be carried out at D-2. The accident took place on D-6.

GENERAL TAYLOR - What objective was this diversionary landing supposed to have?

[REDACTED] - It was supposed to attract attention and help divert the Cuban forces away from the main landings.

GENERAL TAYLOR - How many men do the Cubans have in this area?

[REDACTED] - About 90,000 militia men in this province.

This diversionary landing had another purpose also in that they were supposed to organize and set up guerrilla forces.

MR. KENNEDY - What happened to this force?

[REDACTED] - They didn't land. I think the leader lost his nerve as they approached the beach, and then withdrew, using rubber boats.

[REDACTED] - We think they're on their way to Vieques now.

ADMIRAL BURKE - They said they were going to Key West but we intercepted the ship, the PERKA, and are taking the people to Vieques.

GENERAL TAYLOR - Is that all the people who are at Vieques?

MR. BISSELL - No, there are also some 300 men who had been in training.

MR. KENNEDY - Isn't there anyone at Vieques now who had been in the fighting?

GENERAL GRAY - I believe the landing craft crews are there.

[REDACTED] - We felt that on D-Day morning we should strike not only the three main Cuban airfields, where we knew aircraft were located, but additionally, should hit all of the Cuban airfields. The two aircraft were also going to hit tanks located in Managua, and on this mission I wanted napalm employed. They were then supposed to come back and land at the field near the beachhead where the avgas refueling truck should have been located. All this, of course, is predicated on our knocking out the Cuban Air Force.

GENERAL TAYLOR - How much did they actually get ashore in the way of supplies?

[REDACTED] - They only got what was on the LCU, plus what was personally carried by the troops going ashore. This turned out to be less than enough for even one day's combat. This ship that was carrying the bulk of the heavy equipment was hit by rocket fire from a Seafury and sunk. I want to emphasize that this plan was based on two assumptions: [REDACTED] first, that we would have absolute control of the air on D-Day; and second, that Castro's

fighting forces would be about as efficient as they were in their Escambray operations. As it turned out, we were wrong on both assumptions. He had well-coordinated fighting troops and he also demonstrated that he had well-trained and aggressive pilots.

GENERAL TAYLOR - Were you supposed to control this beachhead area indefinitely?

[REDACTED] - No, we had trucks coming in on D-Day and others which were supposed to come in on D+2. These vehicles were to be loaded with the supplies which were being off-loaded, and then the force was going to make a try for a break-out. The Cuban reaction would be checked closely, as we thought that perhaps the militia might refuse to fight; and if so, the landing force, on breaking out from the beachhead would head for Havana. If Castro's forces did fight and the expeditionary force found itself hard-put to cope with them, they were then to try to break out and head for the Escambray.

GENERAL TAYLOR - How many men did you have to do this?

[REDACTED] - About 650 men were supposed to land in the Blue Beach area, plus the paratroopers dropping in that vicinity, and we were eventually to have about 400 men at Green Beach.

MR. BISSELL - However the initial landing at Green Beach was about 200 men.

[REDACTED] - We were supposed to have about 1400 men total in the three beach areas.

GENERAL TAYLOR - Do you suppose any of them were able to make their way out of there? Can they get around on foot in this swampy terrain?

GENERAL GRAY - That would depend on the state of the rainy season. At its height, they would have up to two feet of water in this area. However, this was just about the beginning of the rainy season, and it should not have been too bad.

[REDACTED] - We think that some of our men did get out on foot. As you recall, we also dropped some paratroopers above the swampy terrain. As a final point, [REDACTED] Castro has only reported the capture of 400 to 500 men and we got over 1300 men into that area.

MR. BISSELL - You have now been told of these plans, as plans, and I think this would be an appropriate time to have General Gray give you the JCS's view or evaluation of these plans.

GENERAL TAYLOR - Why did we think that this operation would be a "less spectacular landing"?

MR. BISSELL - It was carried out at night, in a very remote area, and we had hoped that the landing might be unopposed. We had had no reports of either police or militia in these beach areas. Finally, we thought that if this force were to land without a big show, the operation could then take on the guise of a rebel infiltration.

GENERAL GRAY - We developed a covert logistics plan for follow-up operations, basing it on the assumption of the most optimistic thing that could happen, as our thought was that if events did not turn out that well, and we had less troops to support it would be that much easier logistically. Besides this logistic support of covert operations, we also developed a logistics support for the transition to overt operations. I have a chart to indicate the key meetings involved in the DOD participation in this operation.

GENERAL TAYLOR - Yes, it's very good. ██████████, I hope that CIA can work up something of this sort, using this format.

GENERAL GRAY - I'd like to outline this in four phases. First, pre-JCS participation, that is, up to the 13th of January 61. Secondly, the planning and evaluation phase, 13 January to 22 March. Third, the pre-operational phase from 22 March to 13 April. Fourth, the operational phase from 13 April on. During this first phase in December, President Eisenhower had designated Ambassador Willauer to be the over-all coordinator in regard to all actions relating to Cuba. At the first meeting I attended, which was called by him, he was thinking in broader terms than the operations we have been talking about today. For example, he spoke of getting 5 to 10,000 people from various Latin American countries to engage in training in the United States.

(At 1427 hours, the meeting was interrupted while General Taylor

called McGeorge Bundy at the White House in regard to the possibility of General Taylor going to Vieques Island. The meeting resumed.)

MR. BARNES - There is a document which spells out Ambassador Willauer's participation in this Cuba Project, and the objectives which were given to him. I might add that the White House and other departments were looking to him to expedite any planning which seemed to be falling behind.

GENERAL GRAY - At this first meeting I referred to previously, General Bonesteel and I suggested that the 5412 Group review all the bidding and that a coordinated Department of State, Department of Defense, and CIA working group be set up. Ambassador Willauer then asked us to set up all possible courses of action, and there was some talk of a large volunteer force which then evolved into overt intervention. We prepared such a paper for this working group, and it was approved for submission by General Wheeler and General Lemnitzer. In this paper, we said that the only type of operation which could assure complete success would be one which involved overt U.S. intervention. At this time in the JCS, it was felt strongly that what we needed was a national plan which had Presidential approval, and which delineated the tasks to be done by each governmental department. We prepared a paper on this proposition, and it was approved by the Joint Chiefs of Staff and sent by them to the Secretary of Defense. Because of the fact that this was in the change-over period between administrations, as far as I know, nothing happened to that paper. I think that this is an important fact, as we must face up to the realization that in the last stage of this Cuban Operation, there was confusion as to what the actual concept was. If a complete national plan had been prepared and approved, this might not have occurred. Unfortunately, we were never able to get this done. Later, Mr. Mann of the State Department read this paper and stated that this is what we should have done.

ADMIRAL BURKE - This was the idea of a complete interdepartmental task force.

MR. BARNES - Something like this was done later.